

Bringing immigrants to the polls?  
Voter mobilization through the Kaikkien Vaalit thematic live debates  
in the 2017 Finnish municipal elections.

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Political Science (Politics), MDP in Ethnic Relations, Cultural Diversity and Integration (ERI)

Master's thesis

May 2017

Tiedekunta – Fakultet – Faculty Faculty of Social Sciences		Laitos – Institution– Department Department of Political Science	
Tekijä – Författare – Author Julie Breton			
Työn nimi – Arbetets titel – Title Bringing immigrants to the polls? Voter mobilization through the Kaikkien Vaalit thematic live debates in the 2017 Finnish municipal elections.			
Oppiaine – Läroämne – Subject Political Science (Politics)			
Työn laji – Arbetets art – Level Master's thesis	Aika – Datum – Month and year May 2017	Sivumäärä – Sidoantal – Number of pages 112	
Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract  <p>Voting turnout has decreased in most Western democracies since the post-war period. In Finland, low turnout at elections affects significantly more certain groups, such as the youth and immigrants enfranchised to vote in local elections. At the occasion of the 2017 Finnish municipal elections, a series of 21 debates between local candidates and with a thematic focus on issues related to the increasing diversity of the Finnish society was organised by the Network of Multicultural Associations Moniheli under the name Kaikkien Vaalit (Our Election). One of the goals of the debates was to increase the interest in and participation to elections of immigrant-background residents. Considering the gap in participation between native Finnish citizens and immigrants, does attending a thematic debate affect attendees differently depending on their migrant background? The objective of this study is to build a frame of reference based on existing get-out-the-vote (GOTV) literature to determine what effects can be expected, analyse the reported effects of the panels on migrant background categories derived from practice in non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and evaluate the relevance of the categories for events designed for corresponding target groups in the NGO field.</p> <p>The data used in this quantitative analysis are feedback questionnaires (n = 225) collected at the end of 18 Kaikkien Vaalit events for project reporting, as well as a complementary post-election phone survey. The three outcome variables derived from the survey results are whether the respondent reported an increase in voting interest, found the predefined issues discussed during the panel personally relevant, and obtained information useful to a choice between candidates or parties. The independent variable is a six-group migrant background variable based on the respondents' provided information about mother tongue and migration to Finland, adjusted for citizenship and time spent in Finland. Socio-economic and participation indicators are used as secondary variables to refine observations. The study uses crosstabulation to examine the distribution of answers between groups, and Kruskal-Wallis H tests and Mann-Whitney U tests to evaluate the relevance and suitability of migrant background categories.</p> <p>The debates are found to reach an audience in line with both GOTV research and with the objectives of the Kaikkien Vaalit project. A statistically significantly different distribution of answers is found between migrant background groups for the interest and information variable, but not for the importance variable. Further tests show that the effect on interest differs between groups both by migration experience and by foreign mother tongue, and only by foreign mother tongue for the information variable, while categories were not relevant for the differentiated distribution of the scores for the importance of issues. Findings suggest that the direct effect on turnout is structurally limited due to the attendees' high voting propensity, but indicate the possibility for corollary positive effects. The complementary nature of debates as GOTV efforts is confirmed, and the function of debates as informative events is put into question.</p>			
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords Immigration, democracy, political participation, voter mobilization, election debates			
Ohjaaja tai ohjaajat – Handledare – Supervisor or supervisors Anne Maria Holli			
Säilytyspaikka – Förvaringställe – Where deposited			
Muita tietoja – Övriga uppgifter – Additional information  			

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# 1 Introduction

Voting turnout is in general decline across many Western countries, and the matter has been a concern for both governments and the research community for several decades. In Finland, the current turnout is far from post-war levels, and the situation is accentuated for lower profile elections, such as municipal elections. The poor participation of young people to elections is particularly alerting<sup>1</sup>, with only less than one in three voters under 25 years old casting a vote in the 2012 municipal elections. Foreign residents residing in a Finnish municipality for at least two years (51 days for citizens of the European Union) can vote in local elections; for them too, turnout remains very low, at 19.6% in both 2008 and 2012.

Can this situation be remedied? Depending on the model used to explain turnout and lack thereof, different factors can be identified as suppressing participation, and not all of them are actionable through the policies or initiatives that target abstention as a symptom of a deeper socio-economic imbalance. However, the development of dedicated practices to stimulate voting has been engaged long ago on the grassroots level to address certain structural impediments considered as major obstacles to voting. The United States, with its high threshold to participation due to non-automatic registration and important weight of minorities among the electorate, provides an exceptional field of experimentation to test voter mobilization methods. (Voter mobilization will be understood in this work as an external stimulus rather than as the capacity to self-mobilize, unless otherwise mentioned.) These methods are nonetheless more often used to the benefit of political parties attempting to swing elections in their favour by reaching out to voters, although nonpartisan initiatives led by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a long history. Classic get-out-the-vote (GOTV) initiatives, including letters and door-to-door canvassing, have been refined with a certain degree of scientific rigor since the first half of the twentieth century; they have also been applied to a certain extent in Europe, but corresponding research has been carried out only to a small extent in comparison to the United States. In Europe, too, the political parties have taken a central role in GOTV initiatives, rather than nonpartisan actors. While the concern of political parties is in getting people to vote for

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<sup>1</sup> ”Hätkädyttävä tieto: Harvempi kuin joka kolmas nuori äänesti viime kuntavaaleissa”, YLE Uutiset 20.3.2017, <http://yle.fi/uutiset/3-9519369>; Kuntavaalitrendit 2017, Sami Borg & Sari Pikkala.

them, the perspective of nonpartisan actors, including governmental ones, is closely tied to equality and representation. This perspective is visible in the actions Finland's Ministry of Justice has undertaken in connection with political participation. The sending of a letter to 20 000 first-time voters in the 2015 parliamentary elections is one example.

Yet, information may not reach those who would benefit the most of it, such as those evolving outside of social institutions through which they would otherwise receive it. In the challenge of reaching out to foreign residents, who may speak little or no Finnish and therefore be also at risk of exclusion, certain non-governmental organisations and more particularly immigrant associations have been identified as a possible "bridge" to spread information among immigrant communities in a more efficient and culturally sensitive way. Immigrants in Finland have rather enthusiastically become involved in associations connecting them to others from their country of origin, and the number of immigrant associations in Finland was estimated at 1000 in early 2017<sup>2</sup>. The establishment of umbrella organisations coordinating and supporting the activities of these associations has been encouraged since the 2000s, as interest organisations and middle level actors between authorities and the field. The Network of Multicultural Associations Moniheli is one of them, and as of 2017 the only generalist, non-local and multi-ethnic immigrant umbrella association in Finland. A combination of factors – Moniheli's access to immigrant associations in the capital region, the then upcoming 2012 municipal elections and the possibility to apply for European Union funding for projects supporting participation of foreign residents to society – created a unique opportunity to try and engage immigrants in political participation with the iCount project.

With the third phase of the project in 2015, a new opportunity arose with the suggestion to organise panel discussions between candidates to the parliamentary elections. The concept of a series of low-threshold election panels with a thematic focus on issues related to Finland's increasing diversity was developed and implemented with the help of a network of institutional, non-governmental and local partners in 21 cities across Finland under the name Kaikkien Vaalit (Our Election), together with a social media campaign and early voting marches. As an association coordinator at Moniheli since

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<sup>2</sup> Speech of Minister of Justice and Labor Jari Lindström, "Kotouttaminen on kumppanuutta" seminar, January 17<sup>th</sup> 2017.



2011, I have had a privileged position to participate to and observe the actions carried out under the iCount project, and in even greater detail under the Kaikkien Vaalit campaign name, for which I co-wrote the report of the 2015 event series. The specificity of the topic, the interesting findings discovered during the first event series, and the need for a solid evaluation of the project's outcome led me to write the present thesis about the second iteration of the Kaikkien Vaalit tour.

This study, therefore, is guided by practice rather than stemming from theory. Its guiding thread is to evaluate the practice in the light of research on the issue, rather than testing theories using pre-existing data. Several reasons justify the choice of an exploratory design for this work. First of all, the increasingly stringent requirements related to public funding make of the efficient evaluation of the effect of NGO activity, not only by the criteria defined as relevant by funding bodies, but using a concurrent perspective, a paramount concern for practitioners. This study is exploratory, because research about nonpartisan voter mobilization strategies outside of the United States is very limited, because, correspondingly, voter mobilization initiatives on specific target groups in the Finnish or European context are very limited. As no GOTV initiatives using a similar design have been carried out, the relatively prolific literature on voter mobilization initiatives addresses only separate aspects of it but not the whole. What's more, besides deliberative democracy theory, which does not quite apply to the Kaikkien Vaalit events' limited amount of direct dialogue and lack of factual content, research on the potential effect of watching a live debate overwhelmingly and logically focuses on partisan effects rather than effects on turnout.

The burden of proving that the endeavour has a positive effect turns into the possibility to examine with greater scientific rigor the effects of the Kaikkien Vaalit event, in the context of an election where foreign residents can directly affect the results of the vote. While the research design of choice would be a randomized experiment in line with the ones carried out or reviewed by Green and Gerber (D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008), the surveying of a control group would have required too significant changes to the event design, and neither could registry-based research be connected with the attendance of the events. Therefore, the study focuses on the self-reported immediate effects assessed in the voluntary feedback questionnaire, including interest in voting as a proxy for possible participation, all other structural determinants of voting being equal. The limitations attached to the type of data gathered come however with the great advantage

of the cooperation of work colleagues and local event organisers to succeed in gathering sufficient quantitative data.

Taking into consideration the specific design of the event, with accessible contents for participants of all backgrounds, and the larger potential of effect for foreign residents on the one hand, and the principle of inclusive discussion for all attendees and objective of balanced representation in the audience on the other, the research question is the following: **Do thematic and low-threshold election panels affect their attendees differently depending on their migration background?** In order to examine variations in the provided answers, determining whether attending such an event has an effect at all is a prerequisite. The outcome variables included by the questionnaire and exploited here are how the panel affected **the respondent's interest in voting, how personally important the issues discussed were to the respondent, and how much information useful in making a choice between candidates and parties was gained from the discussion.**

I will therefore proceed in the following order: Following the grounding in practice of this work, I shall present in chapter 2 the context of the study regarding participation of foreign residents to municipal elections, leading to the development of the iCount project and of the Kaikkien Vaalit tour. Elements of previous research susceptible to inform the event series in question will be reviewed in chapter 3, which concentrates on GOTV experiments as an answer to determinants of abstention. Chapter 4 will present the research design in an intertwined perspective between project reporting and quantitative analysis, which will be carried out and analysed in Chapter 5. I will present what was learned from the analysis and well as conclusions in Chapter 6 before presenting recommendations to different actors in Chapter 7.

## **2 Voting rights in search of users**

This chapter will introduce the empirical context of the study: the access of foreign residents, yet their little use of voting rights at the municipal level in Finland. The implications of the low turnout for representation of the group, as well as the angle adopted to look at the issue in connection with voter mobilization initiatives, will be presented.

### **2.1 Municipal elections and low turnout of foreign residents**

#### **2.1.1 What it implies for fair representation**

Finnish citizens and foreign residents registered as living in a Finnish municipality for more than two years (or as little as 51 days for citizens from another European Union member country) were called to the polls on the second Sunday of last April to select their municipal counsellors, and in some cases their city's mayor. This has been the case since 1991, when Finland extended to all foreign residents the right granted already in 1975 to Nordic Union citizens. In fact, as for other elections, eligible individuals were also able to cast their votes for seven days in advance of the official election day in short of 900 advance voting stations across the country, often accessible and highly frequented locations such as local post offices. During the preceding weeks, hundreds of thousands of flyers were given out by candidates and their supporters in the streets, outside metro exits and near political party tents in high pedestrian traffic locations; panel discussions about local politics were organised by schools, associations, the media, and the parties themselves; election videos and campaign posts, created by many of the 33 618 candidates, flooded social media.

In spite of it all, only 58.8% of eligible voters cast their vote, a slight increase from the 58.2% who voted in the 2012 municipal elections, at a significantly lesser rate than in elections considered as higher-profile (average turnout was around 70% for the latest parliamentary elections in 2012 and 2017 and for the 2012 presidential elections). Preliminary voter information for the 2017 municipal election reveals that the foreign language group voted clearly at a lower rate than the national languages groups, at 23.9%. Municipal election voting turnout for all foreign citizens residing in Finland has remained at 19.6% at the 2008 and 2012 elections, against a general turnout of 61.2% and 58.3% respectively. This places which places Finland well behind other Nordic

countries granting local voting rights to foreign residents: in Norway, one in three eligible foreign citizens (and one in four new Norwegian citizens) cast a vote at the municipal and county council elections of 2015, declining from respectively 36% and 40% in 2007<sup>3</sup>; in Sweden, turnout of foreign citizens has remained around 35% at the four last elections<sup>4</sup>. The right to vote after two to four years of residence was granted to all foreign citizens in 1991 in Finland versus 1975 in Sweden and 1982 in Norway, but the later introduction alone does not explain this discrepancy.

What does a low voting turnout imply for those who do not vote, for the society they belong to and for democracy in general? As Marjukka Weide (2009) summarizes, “[i]f immigrants and their descendants do not participate in the political system, they challenge its sustainability”. Similarly, providing a sense of relevance and belonging to society through the idea of equality was considered as an important condition for “democratic social development in Sweden” in the public discussion leading to the opening of local elections to immigrants in 1975 (Bäck & Soininen, 1998).

Low voting turnout of eligible foreign citizens affects their representation in several ways. By abstaining from casting a vote, their interests both on issues affecting them specifically and on matters concerning every eligible individual are underrepresented in the choice of representatives, regardless of the background of these representatives themselves (substantive representation). Looking more closely to the issue, the justification for supporting participation of particular (disadvantaged) groups resides in the need for representation of their interests in order to achieve social balance in the society based on a principle of equality (Hernes (1987), as cited in Bäck & Soininen, 1998), as part of a process of deliberation which would produce truly common interests rather than stacking one group’s interests against another (Phillips, 1995).

On the other hand, the low turnout of eligible foreign citizens and other voters with immigrant background affects their own descriptive representation among elected representatives. The hypothesis of ethnic voting as part of preferential voting, according to which immigrant-background voters are likely to favour a candidate sharing the same

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<sup>3</sup> “Municipal and county council elections, 2015”, Statistics Norway, <https://www.ssb.no/en/valg/statistikker/kommvalg> retrieved May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017

<sup>4</sup> “Participation among foreign citizens in the election to the Municipal Councils 1976–2014 by sex”, Statistics Sweden, <http://www.scb.se/en/finding-statistics/statistics-by-subject-area/democracy/general-elections/general-elections-participation-survey/pong/tables-and-graphs/historical-statistics/participation-among-foreign-citizens-in-the-election-to-the-municipal-councils-19762014-by-sex/> retrieved May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017

ethnicity or belonging to the same, more subjective group (such as “immigrant-background” candidates), is considered plausible, when not demonstrated in certain elections (see e.g. Teney, Jacobs, Rea, & Delwit, 2010). Even though symbolic voting (voters without immigrant background choosing immigrant-background candidates) might play a larger role in the election of immigrant-background representatives than the votes coming from immigrant communities, elections at the local level and their comparatively low thresholds in terms of amount of votes per candidate offer credible possibilities for immigrant-background candidates to be elected, and have in certain circumstances improved significantly the relative representation of immigrants among local councils thanks to strategic voting mobilisation (see e.g. Togeby, 2008) for an example in Denmark). In the 2012 municipal elections in Helsinki, for example, the city representative who received the least votes in 2012 gathered only 383 out of 285 367 expressed votes, which combined with the party’s overall result granted the representative her seat at the council. In 2017, the minimum was 442 votes out of 322 933. Out of the population of Helsinki, 8 676 spoke Somali as their mother tongue in 2016 according to population registry data, which may overlook a significant number of Somali-background individuals, young ones especially, whose mother tongue was registered as other than Somali. These numbers make the possible success of strategic voting far from a far-fetched hypothesis, particularly in connection with a significantly stronger mobilization of voters than usual behind one candidate (Tiilikainen, Ismail, Tuusa, Abdulkarim, & Adam, 2013).

While the right to vote at local elections generally goes hand in hand with the right to stand as a candidate, only 0.4% of eligible foreign residents – meaning not having the Finnish citizenship – registered as candidates at the 2012 municipal elections. Similarly, the number of candidates with another mother tongue than Finland’s official languages increased from 539 in 2008 to 680 in 2012, yet they constituted only respectively 0.3% and 0.4% of the elected representatives (34 in 2008, 43 in 2012) for a share of the population 2.7% in 2008 (2.3% of eligible population) and 3.6% in 2012 (4.1% of the eligible population). This is the equivalent of 34 elected representatives in 2008 and 43 in 2012 across all of Finland. In 2017, with a share of 4.0% of the eligible population, altogether 729 candidates were classified as having migrant background, of which 66 were elected and 137 chosen as deputies according to preliminary numbers provided by researcher Josefina Sipinen. Even though the number of representatives in 2017 was one

and a half that of 2012, the gap persists as they represent only 0.7% of the total elected representatives.

### **2.1.2 Why don't immigrants vote?**

How can one explain the extremely low turnout of eligible foreign citizens in Finland? Low voting turnout can be considered from two perspectives: that of the main theories of the determinants of voting turnout, which address structural characteristics (from age and gender to education and income, to religion and a sense of civic duty) as making individuals more or less likely to cast a vote (the question of who votes); for the question of why someone does not, from a perspective investigating obstacles identified empirically, a perspective particularly relevant to the resource model of political participation (Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995). While voting turnout models and their connections with voter mobilization will be examined in greater detail in 3.1, obstacles to voting more easily actionable than structural factors have been identified as explanations for the low voting turnouts of eligible foreign citizens. Individual characteristics influence how the structure of opportunities affects participation: “[T]here are other factors that are more specific for immigrants: *lack of information, language problems, difficulties with voting technicalities, lack of knowledge about political parties and Swedish politics*, and a feeling of not belonging in Swedish society” (Hammar, cited in Bäck & Soininen, 1998; emphasis mine). The characteristics related to information and competence are the central issues which the iCount project and Kaikkien Vaalit campaign strive to address. When it comes to institutional barriers, in addition to the exclusion of immigrants from the labour market, which increases feelings of powerlessness and decreases the sense of belonging to and contacts with the rest of the society, Bäck and Soininen (1998) point to a media discourse that frames immigrants as a social problem, rather than as potential citizens are to be included in society and thus whose interests would be relevant to political decisions, which in turn dissuades identification with the host society. Studying attitudes in different immigrant groups revealed that social status (as the hierarchical level of integration and contact with the host society) combined with activity level in associations was a good explanation factor for participation to elections or lack thereof. On a very concrete level, lack of information about the right to vote itself, and lack of information about politics in general when access to voting rights is known were pointed out as major factors of abstention among the target group of the first iCount project (Moniheli ry, 2014).

Often, voting rights for foreign residents precede the reaching of a proficient level in the Finnish or Swedish languages, and such a proficiency raises the threshold to access information about the vote. Even if the information is not lacking, be it in plain Finnish or other languages, the question of whether it reaches their target groups is more relevant, and for many potential voters who are not actively trying to learn more about elections, information in Finnish remains the only possible source. Electoral information is available as a PDF brochure in 25 languages on the official elections website portal, but the threshold to electoral participation is higher than a placing a leaflet on a government website. Foreign residents can vote in municipal elections after only two years of registered residence in a Finnish municipality (a requirement of only 51 days for citizens of a European Union country), yet 57% of foreign-born, foreign-background residents between 15 and 64 years old evaluated in 2014 their Finnish or Swedish language skills to be beginners' level or less after five years of residence<sup>5</sup>. Additionally, the increase of the share of foreign residents in the Finnish population has accelerated in the last ten years, doubling their absolute numbers between 2005 and 2015, with a share of the population progressing by 90% during that time, versus 70% during the previous ten years. It should be noted that in Finland, citizenship can be accessed with relative ease requiring just five years of residency required, and basic fluency, defined according to the Common European Framework of reference for languages as in the B levels. Finland is placed in the "Slightly favourable" category of the Migrant Integration Policy Index 2015 just under traditional immigration countries the Netherlands and Canada, with only Portugal attaining the "Favourable" category among all evaluated countries. It is likely to make well-integrated individuals with basic Finnish or Swedish fluency as a requirement for citizenship disappear from the foreign resident category.

If lack of information is a significant factor in the decision not to vote, then what information is needed, and how should it be shared to reach those who would need it the most? Firstly, the number of eligible foreign residents unaware of their right to vote should not be underestimated. A descriptive study carried out as part of the report of the first iCount project for the occasion of the 2012 municipal elections (explained in

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<sup>5</sup> Tarja Nieminen, & Liisa Larja 2015, "Suomen tai ruotsin kielitaito vähintään keskitasoa kolmella neljästä ulkomaalaistaustaisesta", [http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/art\\_2015-11-02\\_003.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/art_2015-11-02_003.html), retrieved May 7th 2017.

greater details in 2.2.2) found that among participants to the project's events (third-country nationals reached through immigrant associations), half of the respondents justified that they hadn't voted earlier in Finland by the fact they did not know they could. In addition, only 10% of the respondents declared having learned about their right to vote from the Local Register Office and 7% from the media, while 40% received the information from their own association or a teacher, and 43% through the project's organised events and activities. However, once informed about their voting rights, more participants declared they weren't planning to vote (46% in addition to 11% of undecided voters). They were also asked, should they not want to vote, why they were not planning to. Putting aside those who had not resided in Finland long enough, the clear majority (22 out of 39 answers) referred to a lack of knowledge about what the parties were standing for and what they were proposing, and what issues are being voted on. According to the report, the question asked the most frequently at the events was "Who should I vote for?" (Moniheli ry 2012).

Where concise information about the requirements for voting can be easily spread using short flyers or word of mouth, providing a comprehensive overview of the parties' programmes on all major subjects in an accessible manner remains a challenge, especially for non-partisan organisations. A fixture of elections is debate – bringing party representatives together to defend their party's programmes, and opposing their view to highlight differences between them. In order to reach foreign residents in Finland who understand English better than Finnish, the English-language service of the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE organised an Internet-streamed debate in English on March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017 under the name "Use your Vote". The broadcast was described as a "historical" event, the first programme of its kind on another level than local. Of foreign residents in Finland, native English speakers are far from a majority (under 20 000 in 2015 in Finland, short of a fourth of the total of native Russian speakers, and only the fifth largest group after Estonian, Arabic and Somali native speakers) and it may not be fair to assume that proficiency in English of other groups would be better than Finnish proficiency. The "Use your Vote" panel most likely reached a well-connected, reasonably informed and likely well-educated audience, whose English language skills, when not native, are at a high enough level to follow without too much difficulty a sometimes-fast-moving debate. For many of those moving from another country to Finland without English as a fluent second language, tuition in Finnish language comes



first, be it through integration courses or direct contact with the society. Among all native speakers of a foreign language residing in Finland, an estimated three out of four speak Finnish or Swedish at least at the middle level (“keskistaso”)<sup>6</sup>. Lowering the threshold for access to information about political programmes for individuals whose social-economic status or education make less likely to vote goes therefore more likely through plain Finnish language than English.

### **2.1.3 Beyond the statistic, a nuanced situation**

The overall picture of low participation of immigrants, as shown above, masks a disparity of behaviours within a very heterogeneous category, both along the same lines as the main population (in terms of age or resources, among others) and due to community-specific dynamics, such as engagement in associative life as one example among many. The structure of political opportunities (legal rights to participate to political life at various levels) is therefore not determining participation, only whether opportunities can be acted upon depending on a wide range of variables, from associational networks to knowledge of the political system (Bäck & Soininen, 1998; Martiniello, 2005). Voting behaviour between groups of different countries of origin varies (see e.g. Hellsten & Martikainen, 2001), with residents coming from European countries usually more active (Kankainen et al., 2009, p. 69). However, Somali-born individuals voted at double the rate of the average immigrant (40%) in the 2012 municipal elections, which places them above other important minority groups such as Russians and Estonians and nearly on par with Sweden-born voters (Pirkkalainen, Wass, & Weide, 2016a). Indeed, the case of Somalis in Finland has attracted significant research interest in order to explain their greater political engagement. The Somali community, earlier third and now fourth largest in Finland language-wise, has been the focus of several major studies in the last few years concerning its members’ active citizenship and participation. In comparison with other major communities in Southern Finland, such as Russians and Estonians, Somalis are particularly active in terms of associational activities (Pyykkönen 2007, Pirkkalainen 2013) as well as relatively more active in terms of voting turnout (Pirkkalainen, Wass, & Weide, 2016b). A particularly relevant finding in light of social capital theory is that the voting turnout of Somali

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<sup>6</sup> Tarja Nieminen, & Liisa Larja 2015, “Suomen tai ruotsin kielitaito vähintään keskistasoa kolmella neljästä ulkomaalaistaustaisesta”, [http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/art\\_2015-11-02\\_003.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/art_2015-11-02_003.html), retrieved May 7th 2017.

parents was found to be higher than childless Somalis, hinting at the constant connection with their children's school system helping to build trust and develop civic skills (Wass & Weide, 2015). Understanding political participation requires to endorse a wider view than strictly formal participation (such as voting), and focusing on interactions between different modes of participation to society as factors. The decline in "civic engagement" (membership and activity in various types of associations) leading to a decrease in social capital has been theorized to affect negatively political participation (Putnam 2000), because "civic organisations" foster a sense of "trust" and "reciprocity" – bringing citizens to see in their counterparts just as good an active citizen, concerned with the future of the polity, as in themselves. While Putnam's analysis may overlook new and yet unidentified forms of social capital, undermining his findings, further studies have shown that among social capital (among which participation to associations) correlates to some extent with political participation (see e.g. Nakhaie, 2008). This correlation can depend on groups or on the variable examined, such as the formality of political participation (Togeby, 2004), but was found to be less a matter of "social trust" (Van Londen, Phalet, & Hagendoorn, 2007) but rather by providing "a training ground for civic skills" (Myrberg, 2011).

Bringing these elements closer to the subject at hand, the position of the organisation which gave the impulse for the Kaikkien Vaalit event series is exactly at the point of interaction between the different dimensions of participation outlined above.

## **2.2 iCount and Kaikkien Vaalit: "activating" foreign residents**

Bringing the previously introduced elements closer to the subject at hand, the position of the organisation which gave the impulse for the Kaikkien Vaalit event series is exactly at the point of interaction between the different dimensions of participation. Although an official translation for Kaikkien Vaalit as "Our Election" exists, the term used subsequently will be the Finnish term, in line with the use of the term during the campaign and with its principles and identity, as explained in section 2.2.3.

In reference to language as a barrier to participation, simplified Finnish language is one of the principles adopted by the election panels belonging to the Kaikkien Vaalit tour, organised for the second time in the spring of 2017 at the occasion of the municipal elections. The concept is the logical continuation of several years of work by the iCount project, which was coordinated between 2012 and 2015 by network of multicultural

associations Moniheli. In order to illuminate the process that led Moniheli to organising a panel discussion tour, as well as both the reasons for this study's choice of research question and choice of method, it is necessary to introduce the organisation and the project in its background.

### **2.2.1 Moniheli**

Registered association Moniheli (Monikulttuurijärjestöjen yhteistyöverkosto Moniheli ry) started as a project funded by Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) and managed by register association Familia Club (now Familia) between March 2008 and December 2010. The project aimed to map the resources and needs among immigrant associations in the capital region and to support their cooperation and visibility. The project's objectives included the creation of a multicultural centre which would create contacts between the members of the network and provide support and advice to them, supporting cooperation between immigrant organisations as well as increasing influence on and increasing participation to society through a representative body within the network (Paasivaara, 2011). As the project moved towards its end, thirty of the multicultural and immigrant associations participating to the project founded Moniheli as a separate organisation, which was registered in the autumn of 2010, and received project funding from Finland's Slot Machine Association starting from early 2011, continuing the project's work in two main directions, service provision to its immigrant and multicultural association members on the one hand and advocacy work as an interest organisation for them and for immigrants in Finland at large on the other. At the end of 2016, the network counted over 100 member associations and had established itself as a major cooperation partner in matters regarding multiculturalism and integration in Finland, both with other associations in the field, with municipalities including Helsinki and with ministries and other public administrations, to whom Moniheli offers access to its wide member base.

It is Finland's only umbrella association for multicultural and immigrant associations that is at once internally multi-ethnic (as opposed to ethnic umbrella associations such as the Finnish Association of Russian-speaking Organizations FARO or the Somali League in Finland Somaliliitto), generalist (conversely to specialized umbrella associations such as the Finnish Multicultural Sports Federation FIMU) and national (as

opposed to local umbrella associations such as SONDIP – The Union of Multicultural Associations in South-West Finland).

Moniheli has been presented since its creation as a “grassroots” association, emphasizing the central role of the immigrants among its member associations as designing and driving the actions and strategy of the network, and actively opposing integration as a top-down process in favour of projects and actions “by immigrants, for immigrants”. The members of the network’s board, for example, are elected among representatives of the member associations and are in their overwhelming majority immigrants themselves.

### **2.2.2 The iCount projects, 2012-2015**

Promoting participation to society as a core objective of the network led Moniheli to apply for and receive funding from the European Union’s Integration fund (General Programme “Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows” – SOLID) for a short project aiming at increasing the turnout of eligible immigrants at the 2012 municipal elections. The project, named iCount, trained 40 “field volunteers” recruited among Moniheli’s member associations to spread information about voting rights (using the project’s material in six languages) and mobilize potential voters among their own communities, often by attending and holding presentations in pre-existing social events ranging from association meetings to church services to weddings and funerals, but also in events they organised themselves with the support of the project workers (including panel discussions) alongside the project’s own trainings and information sessions. The target group of the project was limited to non-EU third-country nationals, and further excluded refugee background immigrants due to funding requirements, thereby effectively barring material production in e.g. Somali language.

Based on the iCount project’s findings about the lack of available or accessible information regarding Finnish politics, continuation funding was applied for and granted to the iCount 2 project. iCount 2 focused on “the opening of the political decision-making process, improving the dialogue between political parties and immigrants and spreading knowledge about participation possibilities in order to strengthen immigrants' status as active members of the Finnish society.”<sup>7</sup> The objectives

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<sup>7</sup> “iCount”, <https://www.icount.fi/english/icount/>, retrieved on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2017

were carried out relying on the “key persons” previously active in the project as well as newly recruited, for a total of around 70 volunteers. They were invited to participate to an “influencing training” session deepening the information they were spreading during the first phase of the project, a training on how to produce radio programmes, and to discussion events about themes such as citizenship, influencing and prejudice. Other events, including several panel discussions, were also organised both by the project and by volunteers; at the occasion of the 2014 European Parliament elections, a panel discussion with 13 candidates was held. The project also produced a “Path to Influence” map which showed how individuals can influence decision-makers at several levels and in different ways. From the autumn of 2014 to the spring of 2015, under the project name iCount 3, the model developed in earlier stages was disseminated to Turku, Lappeenranta and Oulu with specific immigrant communities as target groups: Chinese (Turku), Russian and African (Lappeenranta), Sudanese and Thai (Oulu).

### **2.2.3 Kaikkien Vaalit as part of the iCount 3 project**

As parliamentary elections approached, the JAKE project (Developing association and citizen activity, managed by the North Karelian Society for Social Security) suggested to the iCount project the organisation of panel discussions for the elections, based on their previous successful experiences. Drawing on iCount’s previous findings and experience, the idea of a nation-wide series of panel discussions around common themes emerged, and was presented to representatives from the Ministry of Justice and its Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations (ETNO), with whom a collaborative relationship was already in place through the steering committee of the iCount project (Moniheli ry 2015). The Kaikkien Vaalit tour took place between March 16th and April 9th 2015, and comprised alongside the panel discussion series a social media campaign aiming to establish a common visual identity for the project and an advance voting event where eligible foreign residents were invited to come and vote together. The panel discussions, as the central element of the campaign, were carried out in 18 cities (in addition to four more “side events” on the same theme) in cooperation with a wide range of partners, both at the national coordination level with the Ministry of Justice and ETNO, and at the local level with the participating municipalities’ immigration services, generalist, immigrant or youth non-governmental associations, multicultural cultural centres and local newspapers.

According to the instructions sent to local panel organisers, “the goal of the election panels is to raise themes inevitably brought along by increasing immigration and the society’s diversification. At the same time, they strive to arouse the interest of “new Finns” in participation to societal discussion and influencing”. Indeed, while foreign residents from European Union member countries can cast a vote at the European Parliament elections even without their country of residence’s citizenship, foreign residents who are not citizens of EU countries – in other words, the iCount project’s target group – cannot. To the project’s target group, the events were promoted primarily as a tool to influence an election not through the choice of a candidate and casting of a vote, but by taking an active role in the discussion and engaging potential decision-makers about issues close to the participant’s own concerns and situation; in other words, striving to widen the understanding of participation beyond the narrow practice of voting in elections to informal modes of democratic activity. The emphasis on a wider acceptance of democratic practices remains a central element in the 2017 election panel series, as the target group remains the same even though the right to vote for its members differs from the 2015 election.

In 2015 as in 2017, events granted the Kaikkien Vaalit label followed rules set by the campaign’s coordinating organisation, which can be sorted under two main principles. *Equality* meant that invitations were sent to all political parties, asking for local candidates (the only exception was made for party chair- and vice-chairpersons) to the panels, that moderation was to be strict to share speaking time fairly, and events were to be open to all and free of charge. The openness also belongs to the *accessibility* requirements, which applies in priority to the target group: a lowered language threshold by asking moderators and candidates participating to the panels to use plain Finnish, and by keeping, if any, only the provided informative presentation shown in the background. *Participation* on an equal footing between political representatives and members of the public was enabled using red and green cards given to both panellists and the audience, thanks to which yes/no questions could be handled briefly, and reveal the both the candidates’ and the audience’s opinions about the issues in question.

Thematically, the instructions asserted strongly that the events were not “the immigrants’ own events or discussions about immigration between immigrants” and that the discussion should not focus on specific questions such as “the reception of refugees, integration or racism” but rather on issues “just as interesting for each citizen,

such as employment, the country's security policy, the future of the welfare state, equality..." Themes were set in the event instructions, and comprised in 2015 *work and economy, equality and current politics*, and in 2017 *equality, work and economy and social and health services*. Event organisers were invited to select a certain number of open questions as well as yes/no questions to be answered using the coloured cards, and, if possible, to prepare with local groups, for example immigrant associations, questions related to the local problematics and the group member's own concerns.

## **2.3 Building on the evaluation of the first Kaikkien Vaalit panels**

### **2.3.1 Evaluating the 2015 KV tour**

The evaluation of the effects of the 2015 panel discussion tour was discussed early in the planning process with the ministry representatives involved in the organisation of the campaign. A report was to be written based on observations conducted during the tour's events across Finland and using feedback forms given to attendees during the events, as well as short interviews with panellists and attendees. Organisers of the event were sent a separate survey after the tour ended. The objective of the report was to briefly describe how each event went, to evaluate their success in terms of audience satisfaction, to sketch an overview of the themes that emerged in the discussions, and to draw a profile of the events' attendees. In charge of the report were myself from Moniheli as part of the work assigned in the iCount project as well as Mia-Elina Aintila from the University of Turku. We both travelled to different cities in Finland to conduct observations during the events as well as interviews of attendees and panellists, covering most of the tour except for locations such as Oulu and Rovaniemi. Mia-Elina Aintila focused in her part of the report on the thematic analysis and discussion contents, and I on the analysis of the information gathered using the feedback forms.

Albeit based on empirical observations, the findings yielded by the evaluation of the events (Moniheli ry, 2015) open interesting perspectives. 330 feedback forms were collected from the audience in 18 events to which a total of around 750 individuals participated. Among the respondents, young active individuals were overrepresented, with a strong overrepresentation of the 26 to 34-year-old category, as well, but less so, of the 35-44-year-old and 18-35-year-old categories, with older respondents and respondents under 18 years old underrepresented in comparison to the Finnish population at large. Respondents were also active individuals, in at least two ways. In

terms of employment status, respondents were usually employed (43.5%) with a quarter of students and one in five retired. Also activity levels in terms of active citizenship were estimated using a multiple answer question asking respondents about their practices: usually following the news, voting in elections, volunteering in associations or participating to the activities of a political party, or not considering themselves as an active citizen. Of those that did not declared not being an active citizen, 7 in 10 declared following the news, 6 in 10 declared usually voting, more than half volunteered for an association, and 3 in 10 declared participating to a political party's activities. This suggested that the attendees who filled the survey, and possibly the attendance at the events as a whole, were already markedly active citizens. In comparison, only 6% of the Finnish eligible population belongs to a political party (Borg, Kestilä-Kekkonen, & Westinen, 2015). Women, also, were overrepresented among respondents who selected one active citizenship practice or more from the options proposed; yet they were also very much overrepresented about the few who chose the option to declare not being an active citizen at all (10 out of 11 respondents were women, and eight in 11 belonged to the 12-18 age category).

In terms of migrant background, the event series reached its target group well. Among the respondents, 47% had at least one characteristic pointing to migrant background, with great variations between events – from around four in five respondents in Seinäjoki and Lahti, to one in ten in Salo. Respondents categorized as having migrant background included Finnish returnees, naturalized Finnish citizens and foreign residents. The respondents with foreign background represented 15% of the respondents for naturalized Finnish citizens, 15% for foreign residents having resided less than five years in Finland and 8% more than five years in Finland. Altogether, one in four respondents did not have the right to vote at the parliamentary elections for which the panel discussions were organised. This indicates that the promotion of the events as an arena to influence political decision-making for whom voting is not applicable worked greatly in certain locations, and suggests that the low turnout rate among immigrants in Finland hides a more complex picture of the eligible immigrant population. Other relevant observations were that the active citizenship estimation appeared to be correlated to the respondent's employment status, with employed respondents on average selecting more practices than others; looking at the reason for migration of the respondents, a large majority had moved due to family ties (57%) followed by studies



and refugee background, while only 8% on a work basis. This composition differs significantly from migration statistics when it comes to work-based migration, which represented 18% of migration reasons in 2015<sup>8</sup>.

The average satisfaction of respondents about the event was 3.72/5 on average, compared to 4.14/5 among the panellists who took part to them and provided feedback. Two out of three respondents were rather or very satisfied of the panel, and a little over half declared having learnt something new during the event. The survey also attempted to evaluate whether the panels affected the voting decision of their attendees. While on average six out of 10 respondents declared that their decision to vote or not to vote was not affected by the panel, among the four others, three declared that the panel had affected positively their decision to vote. However, the report written in 2015 did not include a comparison of the effects of the panels on different groups among the audience, for example per the respondents' possible migrant background, or per their declared intention to vote prior to the event.

### **2.3.2 Relevance of the study and research question**

The present study builds on the empirical observations, tested process and descriptive work done in the first iteration of the Kaikkien Vaalit event series. This brings some benefits and many challenges, in particular related to the move from empirical reporting work, whose goal was to show what was carried out in a descriptive manner, to a scientific process. The report written about the 2015 event series was intended to serve as a comprehensive overview of the campaign and therefore covered the attendance of the events and reported effects only in a descriptive manner; the design of the evaluation and the treatment of the collected data had shortcomings to be improved upon. Besides scientific rigor, several important aspects were missing on a descriptive level, such as whether and how the reported effects of the panel varied depending on the background of the respondents, be it in terms of immigrant background or of other characteristics. This study strives to consolidate the observations made during the 2015 tour, and to zero in on a specific question related to the events rather than a transversal description.

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<sup>8</sup> Hanna Sutela, Liisa Larja, 2015. "Yli puolet Suomen ulkomaalaistaustaisista muuttanut maahan perhesyistä", [http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/art\\_2015-10-15\\_001.html](http://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/art_2015-10-15_001.html), retrieved May 7th, 2017

In a similar way as the report of the 2015 tour, this work serves as a report of a kind for the events organised in 2017. A report of a kind only, as the specific question examined here focuses on one specific aspect of the campaign, and further on evaluating an effect that does not necessarily correspond to the declared objectives of the project. This is reflected in the design of the data collection, which covers a wider range of characteristics and factors than what is written upon in these pages. Several questions connected to the theoretical background at large were included for potential further analysis by other researchers or students, even though their resulting data is not wholly utilized to answer to the research question. As a consequence, the sheer range of questions included in the survey used for the data collection is in itself a challenge, as a strict selection among them is needed in order to keep the focus on the chosen angle of approach in the face of multiple enticing research possibilities.

Informing practice with science is also a very relevant concern in the view of increasing evaluation requirements set by public funders. Developing evaluation of projects rooted in scientific methods allows to recommend new or improved practices in view of the results they previously yield; bringing science and practice closer to each other, making practice more readily, efficiently and reliably evaluable, provides to organisations solid elements to question and challenge accepted means of evaluation by funders, and to champion their own projects or applications. In this very case, the emphasis of the first Kaikkien Vaalit campaign on building a strong identity for the concept makes development suggestions all the more valuable, be it, in the first order, to improve future events under the campaign's name, or in the second order, to secure the continuation of the project for upcoming elections.

Informed by the observations made during the previous Kaikkien Vaalit event series, this study follows on in its focus on the attendance of the events rather than their discussions or panellists. In the planning of the events, it is assumed that placing themes connected to the increased diversity in Finland at the centre of the discussions and lowering the threshold of participation by using plain Finnish would make foreign residents more likely to take part to such events. (The term *thematic* will be henceforth used to refer to such events.) The *lower threshold* would allow them to participate on an equal footing with other attendees.

On the other hand, a simple look at the picture of participation among different groups in Finland sets foreign residents as a more evident recipient for activation measures. A more important effect could therefore be expected for attendees with a stronger degree of migrant background. Based on the information gathered from event attendees with the feedback survey, my primary research question will consequently be:

**Do thematic and low-threshold election panels affect their attendees differently depending on their migration background in terms of interest in voting, relatability of topics discussed and feeling of being informed?**

The mentioned aspects of the panels' effect correspond to information available and exploitable in the survey answers, and are thus subjective and self-reported: whether the respondent's interest in voting has been positively or negatively affected by attending the panel, how personally important the discussed topics were for the respondent, and to what extent the respondent obtained from the discussion information that is useful for making a choice between parties or candidates. The findings will also be evaluated in reference to other relevant data available in the form, such as socio-economic factors and indicators of prior level of political participation, in order to connect the findings to previous research.

In summary, the aim of this study is not to answer the question of *what is the best way* to improve the low participation rate of a specific subset of the population, but to evaluate an experimental attempt to do so, and one outcome of it rather than the whole. It is not concerned either with *why* or *how* the attempt works, if it does. Rather, the purpose is to estimate *the impact such events have on those who attend it*.

### **3 Getting Out the Vote**

The thinking behind the recognition of the need for activation of voters, particularly when belonging to distinct groups, was outlined in the previous section. Once the “why” is out of the way, the following question is “how”. The research about voter mobilization initiatives is strongly based on practices, which have not always been systematically been evaluated (D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008). How is voter mobilization supposed to work? What forms can it take? On which voter rationalities do they rely? What determinants of voting turnout or lack thereof do they address? Who does them, for whom are they? Most importantly, do they work? This chapter will build a frame of reference through which to evaluate the Kaikkien Vaalit events as voter mobilization events targeted to a specific group using participation to election panels.

#### **3.1 Getting out the vote in the light of different models of voter turnout**

All forms of voter mobilization practices rely on the assumption that the potential voter’s decision to go to the polling booth can be influenced. What kind of rationality do these practices assume to govern the choice to participate to an election?

Following the typology used by Wass and Wilhelmsson (Kankainen et al., 2009), voting turnout determinants can be grouped under macro-level and micro-level, with a few transversal ones; macro-level factors can be found in institutions (voting systems and election organisation and practicalities, such as registration) and parties, whose bipartisan or pluralistic structure is directly influenced by the voting system, as well as in the socio-economic environment (primarily population-related factors). Macro-level factors, in turn, comprise sociodemographic factors (for example age, gender), socio-economic factors (income, homeownership), sociopsychological factors and resources, such as knowledge of politics. Voter mobilization initiatives happen logically at the micro-level, even if they touch upon macro-level structures such as registration in the context of the United States, and are best often best understood from the perspective of resources (by providing information to influence or encourage voters).

Micro-level research on voter turnout has been carried out from many different standpoints, so that the abundance of information makes finding a “core theory” (Lassen, 2005; Smets & van Ham, 2013) or evaluating the relative validity of each model a difficult task. In Smets’ and van Ham’s meta-analysis of models of voting

turnout at the individual level, the models are grouped into six main categories: rational choice perspective, resource model, theories of mobilization, sociological explanations, psychological model and political-institutional model (Smets & van Ham, 2013). Each model focuses on a different set of variables tested for their effect on turnout, of which “age and age squared, education, residential mobility, region, media exposure, mobilization (partisan and non-partisan), vote in previous election, party identification, political interest, and political knowledge” were found to yield a consistent positive effect on turnout, while other factors otherwise relatively widely tested such as citizenship, race or trust in institutions had overall no consistent effect, although they were found to have an effect in specific circumstances or for certain groups.

Different forms of voter mobilization (get-out-the-vote efforts, GOTV) strive to affect, therefore, certain factors more than others: “Those who try to increase turnout often structure their get-out-the-vote (GOTV) campaigns to reduce the perceived costs of voting, increase the perceived benefits, or enhance a sense of moral obligation to vote.” (Levine & Lopez 2006). The costs of voting, which cover the time and effort spent to vote, from registration to information acquisition to simply visiting the polling station, are most often what GOTV initiatives strive to affect in priority. GOTV initiatives can be sorted along several criteria: whether they involve actual presence of the voter, as in face-to-face GOTV (either one-to-one meeting in door-to-door canvassing or events involving groups of people), or rely on mass delivery of information directly to voters (through different means, from robocalls to letters to reminder text messages) or to the public (mass media), and depending on what information is given out, which is directly connected to who carries out the initiative (partisan GOTV is more common than non-partisan voter mobilization initiatives, whose focus is either on balanced information about the candidates or on objective civic information on voting rights and process). These forms of voter mobilization evidently focus on more immediate factors of participation to elections rather than structural factors, such as social-economic status or education, yielding results that may not persist over time (see e.g. Pons & Liegey, 2013).

A central notion both across several effective variables and most forms of GOTV is *information*: as a resource, as the product of education and the foundation of the correlation between education level and turnout (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980), as the requirement for an effective rational cost-benefit calculation; organically, as part of the

institutional context. Better information (specifically related to the vote in question) has been shown to improve turnout by reducing the uncertainty of voters, which might discourage them to vote (Lassen, 2005; Matsusaka, 1995). While most forms of GOTV revolve around giving information to let voters make an informed choice about whether to vote and who to vote for, “the decision to vote is strongly shaped by one’s social environment” (D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008, p. 137), as voters take cues from discussions they actively take part in or come to see voting as a social norm.

In the following sections, to build an analytical framework for the Kaikkien Vaalit events, I will examine GOTV initiatives in the form of an event, before focusing on GOTV practices focusing on specific groups.

### **3.2 Do events, and debates, increase turnout?**

From the perspective of improved representation of the electorate’s interests, adverse effects of GOTV practices should not be underestimated, as they may mobilize disproportionately voters who were already more likely to vote, thus widening the representation gap (Arceneaux & Nickerson, 2009; Enos, Fowler, & Vavreck, 2013). suggest to focus on different sections of the electorate depending on how far they are from the threshold of the voting decision to increase overall turnout (low-propensity voters in election where moderate-propensity voters are already mobilized to vote, moderate-propensity voters when the risk is that they, in turn, would not show up to vote). In the case of get-out-the-vote events, the risk of addressing only individuals whose propensity to vote is already moderate or high is amplified, as events usually require an additional effort from its attendees; this, of course, depends heavily of the nature of the event.

Get-out-the-vote events are a rather specific form of voter mobilization initiative, and its characteristics place events closer to, for example, live calls and door-to-door canvassing from the perspective of social interaction. Outside of the educational context, most events are distinguished from other forms of voter mobilization by the self-selective nature of the affected group, especially when tailored and targeted to individuals or groups for whom the efficiency of the effort or investment is greater (for example, high-propensity undecided voters in partisan GOTV efforts). From a turnout perspective, the self-selecting nature of the audience at events affects their efficiency in terms of mobilization, as it may attract, for example, higher propensity voters than the

ones who would benefit most of the event's contents. Due to their higher requirements in terms of resources, particularly human resources, in relation to their supposedly limited impact, events are rarely large-scale affairs, as opposed to techniques such as mailings and automated calls. However, their evaluation differs significantly not only depending on the events' many individual characteristics, but also depending on what model events are evaluated against.

In their review of get-out-the-vote practices, Gerber and Green focus on the classic forms of GOTV such as canvassing and forms of spreading information not involving direct contact, but evaluate also several examples of event-based voter mobilization (D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008, pp. 108-119). The studies reviewed are categorized in three types: election-day festivals candidate debates and voting simulations, which share the characteristic of providing a "common election-related experience" (p. 110) to their attendees. Of the three examples examined, it is worth noting that the two former are heavily focused on entertainment: the election festival experiment (E. M. Addonizio, Green, & Glaser, 2007) draws inspiration from 19<sup>th</sup> century festive processions and election day celebrations, without providing itself significant election-related informative contents, rather purely relying on the social aspect of the gathering, while the candidate debate experiment is described as an "a high-energy amalgam of a political debate, the Gong Show, and David Letterman's Stupid Human Tricks." (Nickerson (unpublished) quoted by D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008). While the Election Day festivals were found to draw more people to the polls, to a limited extent and for less prominent elections, the candidate debate experiment yielded limited results, increasing turnout significantly and making the candidates better recognizable among the test group without affecting its members' attitudes about politics such as recognizing the importance of voting, which could indicate that the experiment's results would be valid only on a shorter-term than intended (D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008, p. 115).

The most content-focused event examined by Gerber and Green is the First-Time Voter programme. This experiment, focused on a specific group in need of activation (soon-to-turn 18, therefore soon first time eligible), comprised both an interactive and informal lecture about voting and a vote simulation using the voting machine (E. Addonizio, 2004). As part of the discussion, the facilitator emphasized how elected officials affect issues close to them and their relatives, and reports from the schools

where the experiment took place indicate that the participants showed signs of a de facto group identification as the “youth” when discussing these issues, as the facilitator was instructed to do. While the experiment was successful in increasing the turnout of the test group, the mechanisms underlying the increase in turnout, particularly the effect of the “sense of community” that arose from the conversations, were not explored by the study, which makes it challenging to assess whether, for example, the event would affect individuals who otherwise would not vote at all, rather than later.

All in all, the randomized event experiments examined by Gerber and Green were considered as an interesting complement to other forms of get-out-the-vote practices, particularly for lower-level elections. Beyond their comparative study, literature is scarce regarding evaluation of get-out-the-vote events, albeit they are a rather common practice at least in the United States (see for example the Moms Demand Action’s house parties<sup>9</sup>, or the various forms of events suggested in the AIGA Get Out The Vote Toolkit<sup>10</sup>). It can be hypothesized that their limited direct effect on turnout, and especially the nonpartisan nature of many of these events, reduces the incentive to research them both from a scientific perspective and that of party campaign managers.

While the get-out-the-vote events inventoried by Green and Gerber are readily conceptualized as such, the focus can be widened to include events and practices not designed as get-out-the-vote initiatives, but supposed or expected to increase turnout as an effect. In light of the Kaikkien Vaalit events, the question would be whether debates, in general as well as specifically live debates, get out the vote.

While research on televised debates is primarily preoccupied with partisan effects (see for example Benoit, Hansen, & Verser, 2003 and Cho & Ha, 2012), watching televised debates was found to have a generally positive effect on turnout by informing viewers (f.ex. Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1968), as it allowed to reach potential voters with low interest in politics, even so much as being considered “a reliable way to increase turnout” (Maier & Faas, 2011). However, in randomized experiments the effect is either statistically limited (Mullainathan & Washington, 2006), or not strictly controlled due to reliance on self-reporting (Lawrence & Albertson, 2005); moreover, effects of debates amongst a “multitude of appeals designed to mobilize” potential voters may be

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<sup>9</sup> “House Parties”, <https://momsdemandaction.org/house-parties/>, retrieved May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>10</sup> “AIGA Get Out The Vote Toolkit”, <https://aigagotv.com/>, retrieved May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017.



challenging (McKinney & Rill, 2009). However, attitude changes following debates remain limited, as they tend to reinforce the viewers' opinions rather than change them (Lazarsfeld et al., 1968; Maier & Faas, 2011).

Debates function as a mechanism of acquiring information when viewed from behind a screen, regardless of their format or technological aspect (McKinney & Rill, 2009), but live debates might be a different matter, and they would rely both on the informational nature of the event, and additionally on the possible social effects of watching a debate together and potentially participating or interacting with other viewers. The effects of live debates and "town hall" style meetings have not been frequently researched from the perspective of nonpartisan voter mobilization and influence on voting turnout. A few studies of note exist, such as one assessing the effect of participating to a deliberative debate on the capacity to acquire information about policies (Esterling, Neblo, & Lazer, 2011), as well as another conducted in Sierra Leone, which concluded that attendance to live debates was connected to higher turnout (Casey, Glennester & Bidwell 2015). The Sierra Leone experiment found that both personal charisma and factual information played a role in affecting the scores of candidates who participated to the debate. Another interesting experiment was also carried out in the Philippines (Wantchekon, López-Moctezuma, Fujiwara, Lero, & Rubenson, 2015) with as primary purpose to expand on previous research regarding the effects of deliberative campaign platforms on candidates' perception and success. While the informative aspect of the event allows attendees to understand better the policy options between candidates, the event's social effect acts at two levels: at the meeting itself, where attendees can observe the opinions of other (Fein, Goethals, & Kugler, 2007), which allows them to potentially coordinate to support candidates and policies close to their interests, which are in turn shaped by deliberation as attendees tell about their experiences and question candidates; outside of the meeting, by a spill-over or second stage effect on non-attendees who hear about the candidates' and parties' programmes from attendees. However, the measured results of the experiment were limited both in terms of increased voting turnout among attendees (except for certain groups whose increased mobilization did marginally amplify the success of platforms defending their interests) and in terms of spill-over, whose measuring in a practical context is extremely challenging.

Since randomized experiments among other research have shown that the effect of voter mobilization events on turnout in general is limited, spill-over effect remains an avenue to explore, particularly due to the challenging nature of testing whether one decision to vote affects another in a complex set of interactions and possible factors. Rational choice models grounded in the costs and benefits of voting, and not accounting for moral or psychological incentives to vote, tend to demonstrate that one's decision to vote does not affect positively others'; on the other hand, the literature accounting for the effect of social relations on political engagement (among others Lazarsfeld et al., 1968) has focused only in a limited manner on the measurable effects of social relations on turnout and voting incentives (Fowler, 2005). In his chapter in *The Social Logic of Politics* (Zuckerman, 2005), Fowler examines the possibility of "turnout cascade", which denotes how an individual's decision to vote affects the decision of others in their network. His study's focus is on large scale networks (defined in Watts & Strogatz, 1998) as networks where individuals are mostly directly disconnected from others but closely connected indirectly through intermediates, and form tight sub-groups or "clusters") finds that, in the type of networks under study, one's decision affects on average four other potential voters. In addition to lending credence to social models of turnout, the results also shed light on the mechanisms of the normative models of turnout, through imitation and conformity. The complexity of the modelization of such networks unfortunately limits the analysis in terms of voter characteristics, such as the crucial distinction between high- and low-propensity voters.

Do get-out-the-vote events increase turnout? Depending on a very wide range of individual characteristics, starting with the targeted audience and the event's context and continuing with its purpose and design, events may affect positively but in a limited manner the turnout of their attendees, but evaluating whether the effect is an informative, normative, or other social one is an extremely demanding endeavour. Evaluating the wider effects of an event requires to account for extremely complex social interactions occurring outside of the event itself, which is only possible with large data sets and only using rudimentary models that do not account for the complexity of individual respondents themselves. The question remains whether events as a form of GOTV, which by nature attract usually higher propensity voters than what the recipients of a mailing or canvassing campaign can reach, may compensate this adverse effect by addressing higher propensity voters within a group generally considered as being

unlikely to vote. The hypothesized importance of social interactions on voting decisions bring to the fore the question of targeted audiences as individuals and as groups in get-out-the-vote work. What happens when the turnout of a specific section of the population whose shared attribute is exogenous to their relation to elections and parties, but rather belongs to group identity and a sense of belonging, is at the centre of a voter mobilization initiative?

### **3.3 Getting out the vote of specific groups**

Section 2.1 examined what factors determine or influence voting turnout across different groups and relatively independently from other variables, factors which would therefore be the ones to target for best results in general voter mobilization initiatives. However, while these variables affected voting turnout in general positively, the effect of voter mobilization initiatives focusing on them may affect individuals differently depending on their other characteristics. This is particularly relevant for groups particularly at risk of exclusion or low participation to society, like immigrants in a new society, as explained in section 2.1.2. Therefore, targeted voter mobilization measures should address, in addition to factors with general leverage over the decision to go to the polls, the specific aspects that undermine the turnout of the group in question in comparison to others. Classic forms of GOTV (canvassing, mailing and calling) have been used to reach immigrant communities in the United States, where the threshold for political activity is higher compared to most European countries due to registration. For other sections of the population such as the youth, more specific initiatives have taken place, for example using new technologies. How have these voter mobilization methods fared in terms of activating the specifically targeted groups to vote? On what differentiating characteristics of the target group's individuals did they rely? What factors did they strive to influence? What can be learned from these practices and experiments that could inform the choice of methods and contents for voter mobilization initiatives targeted to other groups?

#### **3.3.1 Women and voter mobilization**

Upon accessing to voting rights usually with the establishment of universal suffrage, which occurred for most countries between the 1920s and the 1950s, women were a typical group of newly enfranchised voters whose actual political participation was not self-evident. Up to the 1980s, women were found to participate to elections and other

forms of civic engagement as a lesser rate than men, even after controlling for factors such as education; however, women's participation to the polls in industrialized countries has been steadily increasing after that, closing the gap with and often overtaking men in terms of voting turnout (Norris 2002; Paxton & Hughes, 2016). For example, women's turnout at US presidential elections have exceeded men's turnout since 1980<sup>11</sup>, while in Finland, the overtaking took place starting with the 1978 presidential elections and subsequent municipal and parliamentary elections (1984 and 1987)<sup>12</sup>.

Besides socio-economic factors that influence voting decisions regardless of gender, the women's socialization as non-voters has been advanced as the main explanation for their lower turnout over an extended period due to generational renewal after gaining the right to vote (Firebaugh & Chen, 1995) much in the same way as the footprint theory presented in 3.3.2. Where social-economic factors between groups converge, women's suffrage may be further diminished by unequal access to identification documentation and electoral violence (Paxton & Hughes, 2016). As for other first-time voters, it is therefore crucial to concentrate efforts on the first opportunities women have of casting a vote. In the United States, much of the early progress in women's turnout after being granted the right to vote in with 1920's 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment can be credited to the work of the League of Women Voters, which was the new name for the National American Women Suffrage Association, the pressure group which coordinated the efforts to obtain voting rights for women in the United States. After their success in having the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment accepted and voted in all states, the mobilization of the women as a movement supporting that goal declined rather than moving on to support better representation and participation of women (Paxton & Hughes, 2016), letting the gap between the participation of men and women subsist. In the face of very low turnout rates in general (49% in the 1920 elections) the League of Women took up voter mobilization on issues of concern for women as the focus of their action after 1920, concretely leading a voter registration effort, which failed to raise turnout at the following elections in 1924. "Thereafter, League of Women Voters actions were

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<sup>11</sup> Centre for American Women and Politics, "Gender differences in voter turnout", <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/genderdiff.pdf>, accessed May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017.

<sup>12</sup> Villiina Hellsten, "Elections and women's participation", <http://www.helsinki.fi/sukupoluentutkimus/aaniioikeus/en/statistics/elections.htm>, retrieved May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017

anchored in scientific methodology.” (Lamphier & Welch, 2017, p. 86). By conducting surveys and analysing the reasons for low voting turnout, the League of Women Voters can thus be considered as the originator of contemporary get-out-the-vote practices grounded in scientific testing. Their approach focused on informing people on candidate positions and relevance of issues to the voters’ daily lives, which led them to become “the country's principle source for nonpartisan political publications” (p. 86). They organised debates themselves, and supported the organisation and broadcasting of the first presidential debates. The membership of the League of Women Voters lost between its peak year in 1965 to 1997 61% of its member base (Putnam, 2000), which is part of the observed wider decrease in social contact (as membership in associations) that is proposed as a factor in the decrease of voting turnout. The lower number of volunteers working with the League to inform and mobilize voters may also be a more direct, if less substantial factor for it.

What can be learned from the League of Women Voters’ strategy in the early stages after women accessed to voting? The League’s strategy started from issues affecting substantively its target group and volunteers, and used balanced information as the primary tool in motivating voters, judging that the enfranchised will go to the poll if they understand what is at stake in the policy debates of that time. The target group of the actions organised by the League of Women Voters was not women alone; rather, a broad voter base was seen as necessary to achieve the desired changes in legislation, which affected women first and foremost, but also women as equal members of society – widening their focus from infant mortality (act approved in 1921) and the citizenship status of married women (1922) to welfare, access to voting rights in general or environmental issues in more recent decades. The League offers to its volunteers materials to support them in organising get-out-the-vote events or registration drives, such as the “Empowering the voters of tomorrow” guide which include the script for a registration event to be organised for to-be first-times-voters in high schools as well as instructions and information regarding its organisation and promotion<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> League of Women Voters Education Fund, 2015. “Empowering the voters of tomorrow. Developing winning high school voter registration programs”, <http://lww.org/files/Empowering%20the%20Voters%20of%20Tomorrow.%202015.%20LWVEF.%20Full%20Manual.pdf>, accessed May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The actions carried out by the League of Women Voters, in particular in the early days of the women's vote in the United States, relied on mobilization around common legislative objectives, and with time informing voters about voting rights and issues of debate took prominence. Additionally, the League's voter mobilization strived to gather voters around the policy proposals it supported, not only women, although women were the most likely to perceive the relevance of these proposals in their own lives and therefore to react positively by engaging themselves. The tools developed by the League to engage young voters, when connecting the issues that matter to them with the importance of voting, provide elements relevant to the situation of newly enfranchised immigrants in the Finnish electoral system. The youth as a target group for mobilization initiatives has therefore shared features with the latter, but also distinct characteristics, one of which being the fast mobility of the group's members towards other age categories, with the distinguishing element, age, vanishing in favour of more transversal, essentially socio-economical attributes.

### **3.3.2 Getting out the youth vote**

As observed in many recent elections since the beginning of the 2000s, the youth votes less than other age categories. In industrialized countries in the last two decades, voting turnout has been in decline, a decline that has affected particularly young people (e.g. Blais, 2000), to a variable extent from country to country, but always with a significant "generation gap" (Wattenberg, 2002). In the United States, the situation is similar, with a low voter turnout among the youth (Walker, 2006) to which young voter initiatives strived to remediate on several occasions. As listed by Fieldhouse, Tranmer, & Russell, (2007), lower turnout among the youth as a specific group has been explained with several arguments, which more often than not refer to a delayed progression in the acquisition of habits or information: that of the habit of voting, of the relevance of elections and their related information, of a sense of duty or of integration to society; or to a lacking sense of civic duty.

The temporal dimension of the existence of the group as the subject of studies or target of policies is particularly interesting, in several ways: the convergence of well-organised and wide-reaching get-out-the-vote activity with substantial media coverage as well as with an election with clear and high stakes brought a significant increase in the share of the youth that voted at the 2004 presidential elections (Walker, 2006) but its effects

faded over time<sup>14</sup> as the group's members shifted longitudinally to the next age category – including also many of the volunteers that drove the initiatives. For elections occurring several years apart, it may therefore be an entirely new group that needs mobilization. Secondly, it calls attention to the persistence of these effects over time. Do get-out-the-vote initiatives targeted to the youth do more than speed up the acquisition of norms, which would, all things being equal, be acquired by the group members to the same extent but at a later date? (D. P. Green & Gerber, 2008). While a longitudinal study has not been made of the same group, low voting activity among the youth is likely to affect voting propensity of the same individuals throughout their lives, leaving a “footprint” affecting the group's representation once they stop belonging to the young age group (Franklin, Lyons & Marsh 2004), and the practice of voting was shown as being habit-forming in certain circumstances e.g. (Coppock & Green, 2016; Gerber, Green, & Shachar, 2003). Starting to vote as soon as possible is therefore important, since otherwise individuals may find themselves disenfranchised at a later stage, but the persistence of the effects of proactive voter mobilization targeted to the youth has not been demonstrated.

Get-out-the-vote initiatives targeted to young voters have usually been focusing on addressing the lack of information that has been shown to undermine the youth's participation, as well as their lack of experience in certain cases. The experiment examined by (E. Addonizio 2004) mentioned in section 3.2 focused on several dimensions at the same time, providing information about the voting procedure and the stakes of the election in relation to the young people's lives, letting them practice voting on a mock machine to reduce their apprehension, and additionally striving to foster a sense of belonging within the group by focusing on issues common to people in the age category. This type of get-out-the-vote initiative is widely replicated, for example in the previously mentioned League of Women Voter's handbook.

Non-profit organisation Rock the Vote has been leading grassroots youth political mobilization in the United States. Besides more classic mobilization tactics such as spreading information about elections, Rock the Vote has organised in 2003-2004 and 2007-2008 debates aiming at including the youth better than regular debates. In 2003-2004, primary debates were organised using a “town hall” format on the youth-oriented

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<sup>14</sup> United States Elections Project, “Voter Turnout Demographics”, <http://www.electproject.org/home/voter-turnout/demographics>, retrieved May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

MTV television channel, where questions to the candidates were coming from the audience, and their effects were compared to those of a classic debate moderated by journalists, to find that “the youth-targeted debate, significantly more so than the journalist-controlled debate, encouraged greater identification between young citizens and the candidates, and viewers of the “Rock the Vote” debate expressed greater political efficacy, heightened political trust, and decreased political cynicism” (McKinney & Rill, 2009). In 2007-2008, the experiment was a debate organised in collaboration with television channel CNN and video sharing platform Youtube, which was used to collect questions to be asked from the presidential candidates. While debates were found, again, to reduce political cynicism in their viewers and therefore encourage political engagement and participation, the format, which relied on a new technology favoured by the youth and focused on questions asked by the “regular citizen”, did not affect significantly the results, which were statistically similar for viewers of a regular, journalist-moderated debate: the viewers’ confidence in their political knowledge improved, which is recognized as a factor in voting (Matsusaka, 1995).

Informing newly enfranchised citizens about their voting rights as early as possible and in a practical, hands-on manner affects positively participation among the youth, but beyond a purely informational effect, be it related to voting practice or partisan positions, the exact mechanisms that govern this increase call for further research. In particular, the limitations of the impact of get-out-the-vote initiatives on a longer term need to be examined carefully from a propensity perspective (whether the subjects who acquired voting behaviour earlier would have acquired it to the same extent at a later date). The thematic approach adopted in most of the initiatives seems to yield results, but again, whether the effect was amplified because the topics were close to the subjects’ lives, or because their sense of belonging to a group was increased, is not tested. The relative efficiency of tailored voter mobilization attempts is therefore not conclusive, while exposition to information likely to increase voter mobilization, without a specific focus or without using technology considered as native to the group studied, shows that in most respects young citizens as a target group are also receptive to information and communication not directed at them in particular.



### 3.3.3 Where do immigrants fit in this picture?

Voter mobilization practices developed by the women's movement through the League of Women Voters strives to mobilize voters beyond their target group around themes affecting the whole society but especially important for women. The rationale behind youth voter mobilization is less related to issues but rather rooted in the long-term negative impact of low turnout among the youth, and specific information delivery methods have been devised to reach out to the youth beyond weakened social opportunities to do so. For newly enfranchised voters with migrant background as a target group, what practices have been carried out, and what of these have proven to affect their voting turnout?

As the number of countries granting voting rights to non-citizen foreign residents is limited, so is the number of voter mobilization initiatives targeted to them, and the amount of research carried out about them. For example, the first iCount project for the occasion of the 2012 municipal elections was the first of its kind in Finland to address eligible immigrants. In Sweden, mobilization through information in different languages has been done as part of wider-ranging get-out-the-vote efforts<sup>15</sup>. However, due to the gap in voter turnout in different communities in the United States, a significant number of initiatives as well as extensive research has been carried out on the voting behaviour and voter mobilization among specific immigrant communities there. These initiatives' target groups are usually defined by their declared ethnicity, and the members of the groups examined usually share a common language, if not necessarily the same status – depending on their country of birth (foreign-born versus second generation), citizenship status (foreign residents, naturalized citizens, native citizens) or their parents' own origins. What can be learned from initiatives targeted to a specific category of residents language-wise that would apply to individuals with as little in common as their move from one country to another?

The overwhelming majority of the research conducted on get-out-the-vote practices uses initiatives carried out in the United States and to a much lesser extent in the United Kingdom (Karp, Banducci, & Bowler, 2008; Nyman, 2017). In Europe, only a few studies have been carried out in the United Kingdom comparing door-to-door and phone

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<sup>15</sup> Bruna Kaufman, "The Swedish way to boost voter turnout", <http://time.com/3558705/boost-voter-turnout-sweden-america/>, retrieved 4.5.2017

canvassing (John & Brannan, 2008) and their effects over time (Cutts, Fieldhouse, & John, 2009); door-to-door canvassing has also been evaluated in the Swedish context in the light of different electoral systems (Nyman, 2017). One study conducted in France addressed the effect of door-to-door canvassing in mobilizing immigrants, where the effect was found to be significantly positive without the “need to be tailored to any community or target any one group” (Pons & Liegey, 2013). The lower threshold for access to voting rights (i.e. no registration needed to become a voter in comparison to the United States) may explain the higher ratio of partisan to non-partisan GOTV in Europe.

With the prevalence of the United States in GOTV actions and research, the country’s demographics are reflected in what immigrant communities are considered the most valued sections of the electorate for mobilization and in the amount of group-specific GOTV that is directed at them. While African-Americans have a long tradition of mobilization within their own communities through a.o. the civil right movement (Leighley, 2001), and therefore may not benefit from external voter mobilization efforts that are not stemming from their already existing infrastructure, the Hispanic minority has been more of a subject to GOTV initiatives. As the largest minority in the United States with 17% of the population, the Hispanics’ low participation rate (Michelson, 2006; Panagopoulos & Green, 2011), its contributing factors and the means to remedy to it spurred interest first from scholars and only later from the parties themselves, for whom the importance of the cost per vote makes it more effective to focus efforts on populations with more propensity to vote (Barreto, 2005).

The Hispanic-targeting mobilization initiatives studied used traditional get-out-the-vote methods: canvassing, both in person and by phone, radio and television ads, and mail. Overall, Latino voters (including Hispanics as well as Brazilian Portuguese) were found to be “pretty much just like other voters” (Michelson 2006). Door-to-door canvassing was found to be an effective way to raise turnout in this group, as it was generally found to do, which shows that no “special Latino approaches” are required to mobilize them; additionally, emphasis is made on the additional positive effect of shared ethnicity and partisanship with the canvassing agent as well as the quality of the interaction, much like for phone canvassing (Ramirez 2006), rather than the contents of the message (Michelson, 2006).

Language, as an element of the shared ethnicity, also factors in the effect of some GOTV efforts: mailed non-partisan appeals in English affected all targeted Latino individuals, when the same appeal in Spanish affected only the turnout of individuals less likely to vote and speaking primarily Spanish (Abrajano & Panagopoulos, 2011). Nonpartisan ads on Spanish-language radios proved to affect turnout positively and in a cost-effective way, as Hispanics listen to radio more than the average (Panagopoulos & Green, 2011). It must be noted that the causality between mobilization efforts and increased turnout cannot be effectively proved due to sample size issues, and that the effects of voter outreach within a certain group may vary significantly depending on a wide range of factors, such as whether the individual subject is born abroad (naturalized citizen) or not (second generation) (Barreto, 2005; Ramírez, 2007; Michelson & García Bedolla, 2014).

Only a few studies have been carried out on mobilization efforts of the Indian-American community, with few conclusive positive results, such as identity-based appeals through mailing whose scope was too limited to draw exploitable conclusions (Trivedi 2006).

While only the Latino category is distinguished from Hispanics by the inclusion of Portuguese-speaking countries, the non-Spanish speaking in the group remain a very slight minority. In contrast, voter outreach targeted to Asian-Americans brings more elements of comparison due to the linguistic and ethnic diversity of the group. This linguistic diversity presents a challenge to parties in terms of costs and efforts (Wong 2006), which may not target their efforts to this group in spite of their relatively low participation. Again, while modest results have been attained using traditional GOTV methods (Wong 2006), the results of studies examining the effects of voter outreach on Asian-Americans underline the complexity of the profile of voters, suggesting that “national origin, generation, geographic location, and the electoral context” all play a role in how effective the GOTV efforts turn out to be (Michelson & García Bedolla, 2014); as proposed by Barreto (2005) and Ramírez (2007), nativity also plays a significant role, with naturalized citizens more likely to vote than the second generation group.

An avenue to address the challenges in the mobilization of a linguistically or culturally diverse group sharing an overarching denominator is group consciousness. Group consciousness has been defined as whether an individual recognizes their belonging to a

group but also an inequality of status between his group and another, and was conceptualized as composed of four indicators: group identification itself, respondent's feelings towards other groups (polar affect), their perception of the group's resources in comparison with other groups (polar power) and whether they see the reason for the inequality in status in the group's individual members or in systemic inequality (system or systemic blame) (Miller, Gurin, Gurin, & Malanchuk, 1981). Group consciousness among Latinos has been suggested to affect positively their political mobilization (Stokes, 2003). While the salience of group identification has been discussed (Lewis-Beck, 2009), some results indicate that group identification, f.ex. among U.S. Latinos, may be more persisting than initially thought on the basis of previous studies (Barreto & Pedraza, 2009). Even though the relative importance of each element of group consciousness on political mobilization may vary depending on different factors within a pan-ethnic group, such as the country of origin, results indicate that group consciousness among Latinos fosters political participation. With strong pan-ethnic group identification and a heightened sense of inequality in the resources between groups, the potential of group consciousness as a factor of political activity becomes a promising avenue for mobilization, for example by fostering the infrastructure leading to increased contact within a pan-ethnic group (Stokes, 2003).

### **3.3.4 Kaikkien Vaalit in light of GOTV research**

What effects on the attendees' political participation, voting and interest in elections could be expected from thematic election panels like the Kaikkien Vaalit ones?

Based on the results of randomized experiments conducted on GOTV events, these may remain only a marginal or complementary way to mobilize voters, due to the apparent limited reach of the method, which is often considered not to affect beyond the event's attendees themselves. However, the propensity of attendees to discuss the event, themes or information obtained through it with their friends or relatives, not to mention the consequences of making the decision to vote rather than not on people close to them, may amplify its effects. Additionally, "events" is a vague term covering extremely different situation where the only common thread is the more or less social characteristic of the occasion. In effect, many other characteristics – among which the amount of interaction and deliberative nature of the discussion, if any; the composition of the audience; the declared purpose of it, be it to inform voters, attract them to polling

stations, or entertaining them while doing so – may change the impact in a more substantial way for those taking part to an event than the fact it is an event rather than a brochure left in a mailbox.

As for election panels, which are usually built to provide a balanced representation of opposite programmes offered in an election, their nonpartisan nature (understood as the striving to offer a diversity of viewpoints to its viewers) does not preclude them to be inherently tied to a political choice – be it for or against a candidates, party or programme, rather than insisting on the importance of voting in itself to affect the sense of duty of potential voters. However, evidence on their effect on turnout remains very limited if not inexistent (Bidwell, Casey, & Glennerster, 2016). Findings in one study suggest positive effects of election panels on the capacity of their viewers to inform themselves about policy issues, and in another, a connection to an increase in turnout. In practice, connecting the effects of one event on turnout, and understanding the mechanisms behind it, remains a complex endeavour requiring in-depth study of large-scale experiments. From the perspective of GOTV events, the informative nature of debates, which are supposed to offer a concise way to understand differences between electoral options, is in line with information and lack thereof as a major factor in the participation of immigrants to municipal elections in Finland.

What do other examples of group-specific GOTV teach us about effective designs to address lower turnout in a section of the population? The long history of the role of women, as a previously disenfranchised class, in voter mobilization initiatives provides important elements of strategies for voter mobilization around issues that affect or concern to a greater extent the group in question; the emphasis on specific issues but beyond the group's boundaries distinguishes it from later group-specific initiatives. From that respect, the Kaikkien Vaalit campaign's emphasis on addressing issues with greater relevance in a contemporary and diverse society as "everyone's issues" rather than only a specific group's is more in line with these early attempts. Other experiments conducted on young voters showed that addressing the issues that concern them the most by connecting their everyday life with the political decisions that shape its rules, and insisting on the relevance of youth as a group, had a positive effect, even though the relative weight of the elements factoring into the effect has not been measured. In GOTV initiatives for the youth, however, the most salient learning is the importance of outreach itself due to lasting effects of non-participation among the youth, both

throughout their own lifetime but also on a generational level<sup>16</sup>. This is all the more important with the growing proportion of second generation youth in Finland.

A lot can be learned from the many initiatives directed to immigrants. The conclusions are mostly related with the characteristics of the target group and the differential effect of GOTV rather than on the characteristics of the GOTV procedures, because classic GOTV methods with a few twists are used, in general. A main observation that can be made is that from many respects, immigrants are like any other voters, as traditional GOTV approaches do bear an effect. Their effect, however, can be compounded by changes and additions in design derived from the group's own characteristics, such as language or media use. That way, door-to-door canvassing had significantly positive effects, even without a shared partisanship or ethnicity, but simply by showing to a section of the electorate feeling otherwise neglected that what they do, as voters, matters. The question, therefore, just like for voter mobilization in general, is to find a way to reach those most likely to be positively affected: the same attention brought to reaching low propensity voters in general should be given within specific groups when designing an experiment for them. For example, when choosing radio adverts with the knowledge that Latinos listen more to radio is one thing, but choosing the language of the advert is another, in that it may affect differently voters with lower propensity. This was the case in the study presented above, where messages broadcast in the mother tongue of group members did affect more individuals with a lesser proficiency of English. This provides two separate elements of reflexion regarding the Kaikkien Vaalit events: while the first iCount project for the municipal elections in 2012 let volunteers organise events in other languages than Finnish, which were successful in attracting participants, all events in the series were not carried out in locations where the target group, and its lower propensity voters, can be readily found. This is the equivalent for events of the principle of moving the voter mobilization initiative in a the most important target group's own space; one example where this was carried out was the second Kaikkien Vaalit panel that was organised in the premises shared by Somali organisations in the Myllypuro suburb. It must be noted that effects also vary depending on other intra-group

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<sup>16</sup> Hannu Lahtinen, Hanna Wass & Jani Erola, "Periytyvää eriytymistä – vanhemmilla selvä vaikutus nuorten äänestämiseen", Tieto&Trendit 1/2017, <http://tietotrendit.stat.fi/mag/article/209/> retrieved 4.5.2017

characteristics, such as nativity (between immigrants, naturalized citizens and second-generation youth).

While GOTV initiatives in the mother tongue of the targeted immigrant group usually yield amplified positive results, multi-ethnic and multilingual groups pose a major problem for the success of voter mobilization initiatives. In order to maintain the inclusiveness and the sense of equality and belonging of all attendees to the same society, the language of the Kaikkien Vaalit main events was however set as simple Finnish. As a common denominator, simple Finnish as limitations, both in terms of implementation – simple Finnish being very challenging to adopt for native or fluent users – and for the section of the electorate whose fluency does not even permit to follow a simplified discussion. On the other hand, using a more accessible version of the main language may foster a common identity as belonging to Finnish society. The choice of themes and the contents of the discussion, in turn, may incidentally strengthen or create groups consciousness among the attendees with migrant background, beyond their ethnic or linguistic boundaries. While group consciousness is not tested in the data available for this study, it opens promising avenues for research about groups not limited to a single ethnicity in Finland, and for the projects and actions that target them.

## 4 Research methodology

This chapter details the methodology used in this study. After presenting the research design and its limitations at two levels, I will review the process of data collection, from the elaboration of the questionnaire to the processing and coding of the data. My own position between practice and research is emphasized in connection with the questionnaire design.

### 4.1 Research design

#### 4.1.1 From research question to data collection

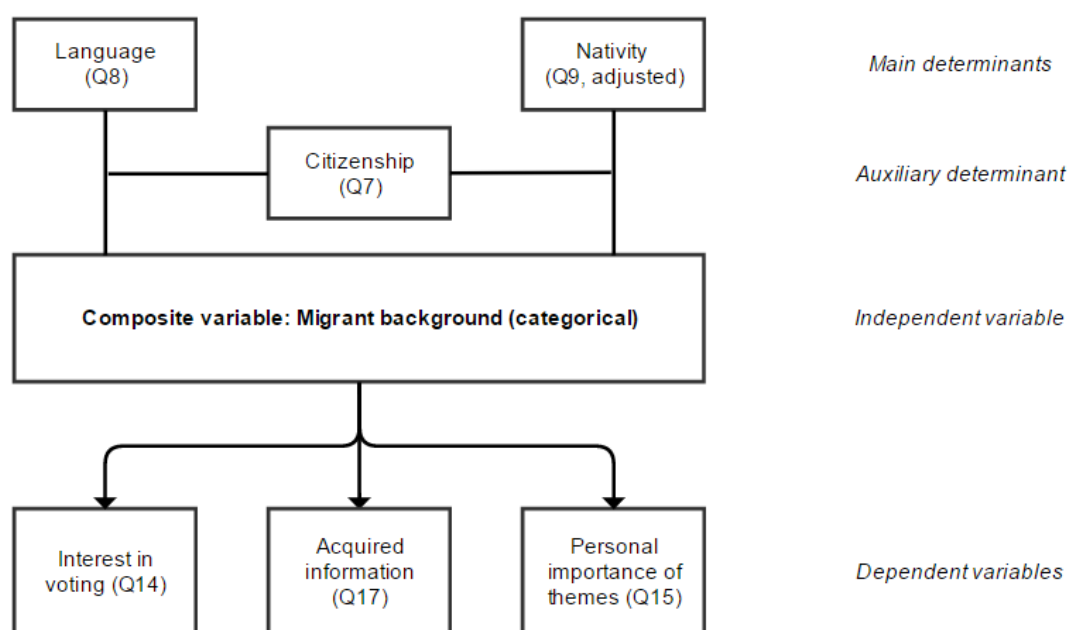
Data collection is based on observations made during the first Kaikkien Vaalit panels, and informed by research on events and other voter mobilization methods sharing similar aspects with the one at hand, I embarked on the examination of available feedback information about the 2017 events in order to answer the following research question:

**Do thematic and low-threshold election panels affect their attendees differently depending on their migration background in terms of interest in voting, relatability of topics discussed and feeling of being informed?**

To evaluate whether migrant background systematically affects what benefits attendees draw from attending an event such as the Kaikkien Vaalit panel discussions, I used information gathered using paper feedback forms at 18 of the tour's main events for project reporting purposes. In addition, a call was made to respondents who had provided their phone number to ask several follow-up questions. Using the collected data, I test the effect of the "migrant background" of the respondent on the effect they reported on their interest in voting, actual voting decision, and feeling of having acquired useful information about the election. Furthermore, selected micro-level socio-economic information and information on level of political participation provided by the respondents is used on a second level of analysis to further explain the results obtained. The hypothesis is summarized in Figure 1, without including the intervening variables or the refining variables for categorization for clarity.



Figure 1. Study design.



The grounding in practice of the study has important implications for the research design, which also interrogate my position as “wearing several hats” at once, both as a practitioner with limited influence in the process and in an external position as a researcher. Travelling to the events, gathering data and observations and co-writing the report in 2015 was done as a Moniheli employee, assigned to work part-time for the iCount project. The iCount project and, consequently, its related work assignment concluded soon after the end of the first Kaikkien Vaalit tour; and although the work related to this thesis was carried on my personal time, save for attending certain events, for a few work meetings concerning the design of the survey form and practicalities of the data collection, and for the shipping of the forms and the writing of instructions, my position as a Moniheli employee and as a researcher evaluating a project carried out by Moniheli cannot be dissociated. Thanks to my work position, I benefitted from unparalleled access to the planning and inner workings of the events’ organisation, about which I provided suggestions to my colleagues in charge of the organisation of the event series. I benefitted of more authority towards the event organisers at the local level than an outsider endeavouring the carry out the same research would have had, and the data collection was included as part of the official instructions sent to them. I am also incredibly indebted to my colleagues at Moniheli who went through the same

instructions and collected the feedback forms as well as general observations at the events they were attending. The “conflict of interest” of a sort between the two identities, the researcher and the practitioner, was the most salient in terms of questionnaire design, where I had to keep a fair balance between the information needed in the continuity of the 2015 report and new questions to gather information that could be used by others in the context of research. The elaboration of the questionnaire will be discussed in 4.2.

#### **4.1.2 Limitations of sample self-selection and self-reported data**

The design of the study itself contains limitations affecting the validity of its results at any other level than on that of the events themselves. Evaluating the effect of a specific event inherently limits the observation to those attending it, for a problematic – political engagement and voting enthusiasm migration-background-wise – that may be more fruitfully examined on a larger scale, such as research using population registry data.

Using self-gathered, and moreover self-reported data to do a statistical analysis, with a fairly small sample of a fairly small population, is an unpopular research design, and with good arguments. The limitations of self-reported data or survey use in studies have been widely assessed in research, and are generally considered from two different theoretical perspectives, according to which survey data quality can be affected by cognitive issues and situational issues. Cognitive issues may refer to “comprehension, recall, and other cognitive operations” (Brenner, Billy, & Grady, 2003). For this study, the eventuality of *memory* issues is limited by the data collection procedure (the survey as a paper form is filled by respondents during, at the end of right after the event); moreover, of all the questions included in the questionnaire, few if any of the questions from which this study’s variables are derived require the respondent to recall a particular action, event or fact. The variables derived from questions asked in the follow-up phone survey do address the act of voting, which took place, if it did, ten days to three weeks before the call, and ask the respondent to evaluate whether they believe or remember that the event they took part in two to five weeks prior affected their voting decision. Therefore, the relative limitation of the latter questions must be acknowledged.

In terms of cognitive issues, comprehension presents a more meaningful drawback for the study, due to the nature of the event and of its target group. As shown in 5.1.1,

linguistic diversity was very important in the audience with a significant number of non-native Finnish speakers with very varied durations of residence in Finland; limited fluency in Finnish may therefore affect both the comprehension of the event respondents are reflecting upon and the understanding of the survey questions. To reflect the principle of accessibility in the event series expressed through the instruction to use simple Finnish, attention was paid to the language used in the survey form and the negotiation between simplified Finnish, complex and precise questions, and space restrictions. Even through my own perspective as a non-native Finnish speaker informed the phrasing of the questions, this is also the perspective of someone who has acquired near-native fluency, yet the survey was not reviewed by anyone qualified in simple Finnish. To address this limitation, the form was translated to English by Moniheli intern Amiirah Salleh Hoddin for the occasion of the Swedish-English language side event held in Arbis, Helsinki and offered in some of the subsequent events. Additionally, in several locations, for example Hämeenlinna on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2017, attending Finnish as a second language teachers, who were accompanying groups, as well as Moniheli personnel helped attendees fill the form by explaining and simplifying the questions to attendees who requested them to.

Situational misreporting, on the other hand, is likely even more relevant for this study. While political participation may not seem as “taboo” of a topic as, for example, illegal or unsocial behaviour and attitudes, which commonly elicit high rates of non-reporting or misreporting, it may be a *sensitive* item in certain contexts, if the rate of missing values for related questions an indication (Krumpal, 2013). Where the theme of the question itself is not necessarily sensitive, the provided answer may be, pushing the respondent to conform their answers to what they perceive as being a socially accepted behaviour within a group of reference (from society at large to the subject’s own community or group). As summarized by Krumpal, “[s]ocial desirability refers to making oneself look good in terms of prevailing cultural norms when answering to specific survey questions.” Social desirability is a prevalent factor in the overrepresentation of voting in electoral surveys compared to voting registry data, and a significant amount of literature is dedicated to explaining this phenomenon (see e.g. Abelson, Loftus, & Greenwald, 1992 and Anderson & Silver, 1986); also social pressure may play a role in leading to increased voting activity as well as to overreporting of it (Bernstein, Chadha, & Montjoy, 2001). In order to decrease the

number of false positives in the data collected, different techniques have been experimented, such as providing “good excuses” for lack of voting either in the text introducing the survey or among the answers of the question (Duff, Hanmer, Park, & White, 2007). The results of such experiments are mixed (Brenner, 2012). Taking this into consideration, in the follow-up phone survey, a sentence was included emphasizing the importance of truthful answers in an attempt to shift the object of the socially acceptable behaviour. Otherwise, the questions generating the dependent variables inherently focus on reported interest or intentions, which for the scope of this study could not be measured by other, more objective methods. As much as social desirability represents a drawback for research based on self-reported data, social desirability may be an advantage from the practitioner’s perspective, suggesting by asking questions on political participation that the respondents adopt positively valued behaviour – such as taking interest in the election, following the news about it, or voting.

Statistical analyses are usually conducted on samples as large as possible in order to generate results applicable to a population as large as possible. By contrast, this study’s population is comparatively very small, and self-selection occurs at both the population level and the sample level. Bar a handful of student groups who attended events as part of a Finnish as second language course, participants came on their own initiative to listen to a panel discussion between election candidates, which suggests that their interest in the elections is already moderate to high, be their reason to attend the selection of a party or candidate, learning about current affairs, participating to a discussion with potential decision-makers, or interacting with others who came to the same event – all are different facets of active citizenship. For that reason, and in the light of the limited overall participation of foreign residents to elections in particular, this study’s results cannot be generalized to the whole population or to all migrant-background residents of Finland. Additionally, the sample itself is self-selected: the attendees who accepted to participate to the survey by filling the form. It can be assumed that social desirability applies here as well, and that some attendees who do not consider themselves as active enough for the society’s standards or those of the event organisers did not fill or return the form for that reason.

## **4.2 Questionnaire design and data collection**

### **4.2.1 Questionnaire design and review**

The elaboration of the questionnaire used to gather data from the audience reflects the double position I occupied during the event series and its preparation. In nature, the data collection follows on the design and procedure used in the first Kaikkien Vaalit tour in 2015. For reasons of continuity and compatibility of the information with what was gathered in 2015, the questionnaire draws heavily from the first version used in 2015. Even though I designed the first version of the form together with Mia-Elina Aintila in 2015 and built upon it for the version used in 2017, the constraints limit the amount of information directly relevant to the research question in the questionnaire, and make necessary to transform the data to some extent for use in this study.

The paper feedback forms, however logistically challenging their handling may be, were chosen for the events for several reasons. First, they allow to gather data from many attendees at once during or right after the event they are asked to evaluate, effectively reducing the potential for memory issues. Secondly, the events were open to the public and did not require registration or signing an attendance list; contacting attendees after the fact would be therefore impossible without gathering at least contact information from them first. Additionally, supposing that contact information would be readily available or gathered first, the possibility of using an online form rather than a paper one was rejected based on the assumption that the response rate for an online form would be extremely low, as it has generally been in my work experience.

The draft of the questionnaire received comments regarding question syntax and types of answers from researchers Sami Borg, Hanna Wass (by email) and Josefina Sipinen (in a meeting together with Moniheli's Executive Director Riitta Salin). The version of the questionnaire used can be read in Appendix 1.

In light of the complexity of factors governing voting decisions, the questionnaire is on purpose covering a very wide range of aspects, of which not all are be exploited in this work, but could be by other students or researchers. The questions strive to combine different approaches: self-reported objective information, by gathering data about the respondents that is either directly comparable to statistical records or from which other categorizations can be inferred, or both; subjective self-evaluation of the respondents' own practices related to democracy and political activity, and evaluation of the event

attended. A specific challenge was to gather as much data as possible using only a double-sided A4 page; to do so, several questions provided data from which variables had to be composed rather than being exploitable one-to-one as variables. The questionnaire itself is divided in three main sections: respondent's background, active citizenship practices and perception of the event. For this study, I will focus on the questions of the respondent background section used in determining their "migrant background", the questions related to voting intention and to the impact of the event.

The first section includes questions aiming to determine, sometimes in combination with other questions, the respondent's civil and socio-economic status (questions 1 through 6) and possible immigration background (7 to 10). The second section comprises questions 11 to 13 and focuses on past and present voting behaviour and enthusiasm (question 10 and 11) and on different aspects of active citizenship (perceived level of information in 13a, interaction with relatives and friends about politics in 13b, activity in different organisations in 13c). The third section exclusively deals with the event itself, its effect on voting enthusiasm, the personal importance of the themes discussed and most important theme discussed, the acquisition of useful information about politics, and general feedback about the event (questions 14 through 18).

The first section's socio-economic questions address age (question 1), gender (2), civil situation and children (3 and 4), education level (5, as the number of years spent studying, to be recoded using the classification from Statistics Finland<sup>17</sup>, and occupation (6). When it comes to migrant background, it is usually evaluated (i.a. by Statistics Finland) from several different perspectives, including mother tongue and citizenship; in this case, the objective was to build composite categories based on these indicators that would be closer to the less restrictive target group definition used in such projects. The purpose is to operationalize the thinking behind "target groups" of such projects, and conversely make the results more accessible for the profane reader. In addition to the citizenship and mother tongue, respondents are asked whether they moved to Finland, as well as the reason (question 9) and duration of their stay in Finland (question 10), if they report having moved from another country.

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<sup>17</sup> Statistics Finland, "Käsitteet: Koulutusaste", <http://www.stat.fi/meta/kas/koulutusaste.html>, retrieved May 7th 2017.

The second section focusing on participation includes questions aiming to evaluate both voting enthusiasm and behaviour in 2012 and 2017 (questions 11 and 12).

Unfortunately, a missing choice in question 11 prevents from evaluating enthusiasm levels for respondents without voting rights in 2012 (“En voinut äänestää enkä olisi halunnut” was missing, i.e. “I could not vote but I would not if I could have.”) The rest of the section, which focuses on active citizenship practices, comprises the question 13, which is itself sub-divided in three parts: self-evaluation of the respondent’s attention to the media at different levels (13a), of their relative volume of interaction about politics with various individuals around them (13b), and of their level of activity in different organisations (13c). Several of the statements proposed were more obviously targeted at immigrant-background respondents, including attention to politics in the media and political activity in connection with the respondent’s country of origin, and activity in associations connected to the country of origin.

The third section of the questionnaire is strictly related to the evaluation of the event by the respondent: whether the event affected their interest in the upcoming municipal elections (question 14), how important to the respondent the issues included in the discussions were (question 15), what among them was the most important issue discussed as an open answer (question 16, which for lack of means will be only included in the project report), whether the event provided information that the respondent found useful in their choice of a party or candidate (question 17) and finally a general assessment of the event as a mood choice between very dissatisfied and very satisfied (question 18, also for project reporting purposes). Some of the questions in the third section are designed in combination with questions in other sections, such as the self-reported effect of the event in the light of other factors described earlier; others are geared towards evaluation of the events as part of the panel discussion tour’s general reporting. While the most important issue discussed is presented as an open-ended question, the evaluation of the relevance of the issues discussed is based on the instructions sent to event organisers, which framed the discussion around several determined themes and using pre-set questions.

#### **4.2.2 Other sources of data**

Besides the survey questionnaire, which is the primary source of data in this study, complementary information with a strong focus on project reporting was collected by

other means; relevant information issued from the other means of collection will be included when relevant to the analysis. The other sources of data include a paper reporting form used by Moniheli employees when attending events during the tour, an online reporting form sent to organisers when Moniheli employees were not on location, and a post-election phone survey conducted with respondents who provided their phone number on the feedback form.

The paper form filled by Moniheli representatives contained attendance numbers for the event, main themes discussed, how much the discussion specifically covered questions directly related to immigration, and what questions were asked by audience members as well as the observed profile of the attendee asking (assumed gender, age, migrant background). Online reporting form included the same questions, as well as information about the structure of the events, use of the suggested interactive elements and the organiser's own observations and evaluation of the cooperation with Moniheli in organising the event. Finally, the phone survey, which was carried out by coder Magdalena Stenius, included a disclaimer aiming to encourage respondents to disclose whether they voted, even if they had not; whether the Kaikkien Vaalit panel played a role in the respondent's decision to go vote or not and their candidate or party choice, how much the respondent has followed the news in the media about the municipal elections, and whether the respondent had discussed about the election with friends and relatives, using the same list as in the survey questionnaire. The script and codebook for the phone survey is in Appendix 3.

#### **4.2.3 Data collection procedure**

To facilitate the work of the event organisers, questionnaires were printed and brought by attending Moniheli employees, or alternatively mailed to the event locations where Moniheli employees could not attend. Mailed questionnaires included a stamped return envelope as well as a separate reminder of the instructions concerning the forms, which were also included in the moderator instructions sent to each organiser. Similarly, Moniheli employees and interns who were scheduled to attend an event took part to a briefing session about their role in the event, including distributing and collecting the forms and briefing the local moderators in turn. The questionnaires were brought along by Moniheli employees in 10 locations and mailed to another 11 locations; out of the locations to which forms were mailed, three locations did not receive the forms, could



not proceed to the data collection for external reasons, or did not return filled forms for unspecified reasons (see Table 1).

Table 1: Attendance, collected questionnaires and person in charge of data collection in 2017 Kaikkien Vaalit events.

Event date and city	Reported number of attendees	Number of entries per event	Responsible for data collection
14.3. Hämeenlinna	25	0*	Local event organiser
15.3. Espoo	50	7	Moniheli employee (myself)
16.3. Pori	64	21	Local event organiser
20.3. Tampere	45	8	Moniheli employee
21.3. Oulu	No data	1	Local event organiser
21.3. Hämeenlinna	45	19	Moniheli employee
22.3. Hämeenlinna	No data	0	No data collection**
22.3. Helsinki	4	0	Moniheli employee
22.3. Vantaa	60	27	Moniheli employee
22.3. Vaasa	30	15	Local event organiser
22.3. Pietarsaari	30	7	Local event organiser
22.3. Salo	13	9	Local event organiser
23.3. Kouvola	45	20	Moniheli employee
23.3. Kuopio	32	0	No data collection**
25.3. Rovaniemi	40	0	No data collection**
27.3. Mikkeli	30	11	Moniheli employee
27.3. Turku	20	10	Moniheli employee
28.3. Lappeenranta	40	18	Moniheli employee
29.3. Lieksa	52	18	Local event organiser
30.3. Karjaa	35	19	Local event organiser
3.4. Helsinki	60	15	Moniheli employee (myself)
Total	720	224	

\* Test version of the form not included in the data set. \*\* The local organisers did not receive the mailed forms.

Data collection at the event proceeded as such: the questionnaire was usually placed on the attendees' chairs together with a set of red and green cards before the beginning of the event. Event moderators were instructed, either in written or by attending Moniheli employees, to briefly explain to the audience the purpose of the information gathering in their introduction of the event, and to remind attendees to both fill the questionnaire (15 to 30 minutes before the end of the event) and return filled questionnaires to a

specific collection point upon leaving (as the events' closing words). The instructions were not necessarily followed to the letter in all events; for example, disturbances towards the end of the Oulu event affected negatively the filling and return of questionnaires, as reported by the event's organisers. Full compliance with the instructions could not be verified in all locations by Moniheli employees; however, the rate of return (31.2% of reported attendees, including non-surveyed events) is by NGO standards relatively high. A test run of the questionnaire was carried out in the tour's first event in Hämeenlinna, but its results were excluded due to subsequent changes in the form. Questionnaires were also used in one side-event, which due to its different structure from the official Kaikkien Vaalit event, is not used in this study.

### **4.3 Preparing the data for analysis**

The data was entered to and analysed using IBM SPSS version 24 by former Moniheli intern Magdalena Stenius using the codebook available in Appendix 2. The data entered covers all the information available in the form. Some processing of the information was carried out by the coder upon entering the variables (i.e. Question 9 entered as four binary variables with two possible additional string variables) while I recoded the composite variables to be used in the analysis after cleaning and recoding the data where needed. Respondents who did not answer to question 9, even with the eliminating option "En muuttanut Suomeen" (I did not move to Finland), were marked as the eliminating option if they indicated that their only citizenship was Finnish and their mother tongue one of the national languages.

#### **4.3.1 Migrant background as a composite independent variable**

The foreign population is often spoken of in an imprecise way and without thinking any particularly of what is meant by it. Do we want to describe foreign nationals, foreigners, non-native speakers or something else? Do we also want to include in the figures immigrants from the second or third generation? [...]

How to measure foreignness, then? Which factors determine foreignness or foreign background? The classifications used in traditional statistics by language, nationality and country of birth cannot account, for example, for the distinctive circumstances of children whose parents were born abroad, i.e. second-generation migrants.

(Kaija Ruotsalainen & Jari Nieminen, "Toisen polven maahanmuuttajia vielä vähän Suomessa", Tieto&trendit 4-5/2012, own translation)

The expected growth of the Finnish population with a migrant background poses already now the question of how to gather information relevant to the issues that may arise from increased diversity and migration. Due to the many aspects that contribute to

giving someone a “foreign migrant” or “migrant origin”, from cultural to legal ones, migrant background is more of a spectrum than a clear classification, and statistical instruments may fall short of giving a sensible picture of the situation. While comparing the dependent variables to singled-out characteristics such as citizenship or mother tongue is possible using the gathered data, I first built the categories using the relevant information provided by respondents relative to their background in order to evaluate at a glance if the categorization is relevant to the effects of attending a specially targeted panel discussion. The primary criteria considered are moving to Finland or not and mother tongue, with citizenship as a refining variable for some categories, and adjustment by age in one category. The categorization is operated as follows:

In this study, **immigrants** denote individuals without Finnish background who moved to Finland but do not have a Finnish citizenship. Access to naturalization requires from two to seven years or more of residence in Finland, therefore this category contains a variety of profiles: individuals who cannot yet apply for a Finnish citizenship, or whose situation constrains to a different extent the necessity to acquire it (f.ex. the cost and effort involved in renewing residence permits, which is not relevant for citizens of the European Union). Respondents categorized as immigrants had indicated having another or a former citizenship but no Finnish citizenship, another mother tongue than Finland’s official languages, and indicated a moving reason.

**Naturalized citizens** are immigrants who have acquired Finnish citizenship.

Respondents categorized as naturalized citizens indicated a reason for their move to Finland, having Finnish as well as another or a former citizenship, and another mother tongue than Finland’s official languages.

In this study, the term **second generation** refers to respondents who did not move to Finland, but have an element or two of migrant background, such as another citizenship than Finnish or another mother tongue than Finland’s official languages. These elements are used as proxy for the usual criterion for second generation classification, which is having foreign-born parents. In this case, the term covers a wide range of realities that the information in the questionnaire does not allow to distinguish, for example whether the respondent’s both parents or only one of them were immigrants themselves. Similarly, scholarly discussion about the typology’s development is extensive (see e.g. Rumbaut, 2004). Considering school as a major socialization factor,

children without Finnish ancestry that were born abroad but moved to Finland before school age (6 years old; in Rumbaut's categorization, the 1.75 generation) were considered in this study as "second generation" rather than placed in the "immigrant" or "naturalized" category. As individuals with both the experience of moving to Finland from another country and another background than Finnish are at the centre of this study, the level of detail in this category remains purposefully low.

Conversely, **Finnish-background returnees** refer to respondents with the experience of moving to Finland but Finnish as a mother tongue, regardless of their citizenship. It is of note that this group may include individuals who are not "returnees" (*paluumuuttajat*) *stricto sensu*, in that they are not returning to Finland, as they were born abroad from parents with Finnish origins.

Finally, **Native Finns** include individuals who reported only Finnish citizenship, one of Finland's national languages as a mother tongue, and no move to Finland. The category does not account for ethnic differences, and may include respondents who would by their parentage rather belong to the "second generation" group; as observed during data collection in the second Helsinki event in Myllypuro, the frequency of "Finnish as a mother tongue" among the survey's respondents was higher than expected, as all but a few attendees had Somali background. This may reflect the distinction between a child's officially registered mother tongue, which determines access to state-supported mother tongue tuition and placement to "Finnish as a second language" course groups in school, the actual language of the parents, and the respondent's perceived dominant language.

A separate treatment was applied to respondents who indicated that their mother tongue was Swedish in order to distinguish Swedish speakers who immigrated to Finland from Finland Swedes. Unclear cases were included in the **Other** category.

#### 4.3.2 Reported effect of the panel as dependent variables

While the ideal dependent variable would be whether the respondent voted or not, the impossibility to connect respondents with matching registry data on voting activity on the one hand, and the crucial lack of reliability of self-reported voting behaviour (as presented in 4.1.2) preclude from attempting to evaluate the actual effect of the panel on voting activity. Therefore, other variables are used as proxies to evaluate a potential influence on voting decision. The dependent variables are derived from a set of scale

questions (Likert scale or considered as equivalent) regarding the perceived effect of the panel on the respondent's interest in voting (Q14), on the personal importance of the subjects discussed in the panel (Q15) and on the respondent's perception of having learned useful information to guide their choice of a candidate or understand better their positions (Q17). The three variables examined were evaluated by respondents on a scale with the middle answer (3) as a neutral point, "no effect", on the effect on interest towards the election, and increasing scales for the personal importance of topics discussed and for the acquisition of useful information variable, starting at 1 = "not at all" through "Very important" and "Very much" respectively.

#### **4.3.3 Socio-economic categories and participation as secondary explanatory variables**

Considering previous research conducted on the factors affecting or determining participation in general and among immigrant communities, additional questionnaire information along two themes will be used to provide a second level of analysis to the analysis by migrant background groups: socio-economic situation and previous participation.

The socio-economic situation is represented by several variables derived of the answers to questions in the first section of the questionnaire. The classification is mostly based on the categorization used by i.a. Pirkkalainen, Wass and Weide, (2016b) in their analysis of the participation of Somalis in Finland.

Age was based on the year of birth provided by the respondent in Question 1 and recoded into age categories 18-24, 25-34, 35-54, 55-69 and over 70 years old. Gender was coded directly into the database as male, female and other (Question 2). Family situation was also coded one-to-one with the answers to Question 3: Single, Married or in a registered partnership, Cohabiting, Divorced, and Widow(er). Number of children under 18 years old (Question 4) was recoded from blank to zero for all respondents who provided answers to other socio-economic background questions, leaving the entry missing in the case of a partially filled survey. Education (Question 5) was asked about in terms of years spent studying and converted to aggregate categories with the values of None (for an indicated 0 year spent studying), Folk school (one to six years of study), primary school (seven to nine years of study), high school, second degree and vocational education (10 or 11 years), university of applied sciences or lower secondary

education (12 to 14 years) and higher secondary education (15 to 16) as well as doctoral or combined education for over 17 years of education. In case of a non-nominal answer – some respondents wrote directly their qualification – the entry was manually added to the corresponding category. Finally, employment situation was also coded directly into the database one-to-one with answers to Question 6, with the exception of respondents who indicated more than one answer and were added to the Other category.

While participation is considered as a dependent variable in the framework of this study, it may also be considered as an independent variable thanks to its reinforcing effects. As mentioned at several stages of the theoretical part of this work, voting behaviour tends to persist over time, which emphasizes the threat linked to low participation of the youth to present elections for future ones, and for further generations. Evidence supports the transferability model, according to which previous voting activity has also been correlated to increased participation in the country of arrival of immigrants (see e.g. Wass, Blais, Morin-Chassé & Weide, 2015). A high level of political participation, and specifically of voting intention, should be expected from individuals coming voluntarily to an election panel. Due to questionnaire design issues mentioned in 4.2.1, and since both voting intention and effect on voting interest are surveyed at the same point in time, it is unclear whether the former includes already the latter, so the “starting point” at which the respondent’s interest lies before the panel remains undetermined. However, the possibility of differential effects within groups based on participation can be explored. The variable used to do so will be whether the respondent indicates an intention to vote in 2017; however, most of the other possible variables, i.e. active citizenship profiles and attention to media, will be left aside for a possible separate analysis.

#### **4.3.4 Exploring the phone survey data**

The phone survey data covers a sub-sample of the initial sample, which will be examined separately from the analysis of the questionnaire data for consistency and clarity in order to make complementary observations.

In addition to asking, regardless of the self-reporting issues, whether the respondent did vote or not, the phone survey’s goal was to evaluate the effects of the panel post-election. These questions provide a more detailed picture of the respondents’ behaviour thanks to the phone number connection between the answered questionnaire and the

phone survey answers. The questions were all answered on a Likert scale, from Not at all to Very much, with additional opting out options. Phone survey participants were asked how the Kaikkien Vaalit panel they attended influenced their decision to cast a vote or not and their choice of candidate or party. Then, they were asked how much they followed the news about the municipal elections, and how much they had discussed about the elections with their friends or relatives. Similarly to the complementary data discussed in 4.3.3, only the voting variable and post-election reported effect of panel will be considered in this study.

## 5 Analysis

As presented earlier, survey results with primarily multiple choice answers as the type of data collected determine the nature of this study as quantitative. Furthermore, the focus on the relevance of categorization by migrant background and on its evaluation naturally brings the analysis away from the individual level. As an interrogation arising from practice and practical concerns rather than from the testing of a theory, the research is also exploratory rather than confirmatory.

Before answering to the research question about the variation of reported effects depending on the migrant background of the respondent, I will start with presenting and commenting the collected data using frequencies: first about the migrant background categories, then in terms of socio-economic factors, which will be further presented by migrant background category. Then, I will present the overall results for each dependent variable presented previously, and for the secondary participation variable. The second step will be to examine the variations between groups based on migrant background, in order to answer the research question. Crosstabulation will be used to do so, and the results will be refined where suitable with socio-economic and participation characteristics as intervening variables. Finally, to test the relevance of the operated categorization, I will proceed with the Kruskal-Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test; the method choices will be explained in their respective subsections. After the main analysis, the results of the phone survey on its sub-sample will be briefly presented and discussed.

### 5.1 Description of the sample

Out of the total attendance of the Kaikkien Vaalit event series, which was estimated at 720 attendees in 21 events as indicated in table 1 (between 13 and 64 attendees and median of 40 attendees for evaluated events), questionnaires were in used in 17 events and yielded 225 answers ( $n = 225$ ).

Descriptive statistics are particularly informative in this case. While the sample itself is self-selected by choosing to answer the feedback form or not, the attendance of the events as a population cannot be itself considered a representative sample of the migrant background voters or simply voters in Finland, not only in terms of sample size, but due to the self-selection operated by choosing to visit a Kaikkien Vaalit election panel.



Therefore, descriptive analysis can provide important information as to the profile of the individuals who choose to take part to such an event. Additionally, in order to evaluate whether the effect varies depending on the respondent's migrant background, the general effect of the panel must be evaluated first.

### **5.1.1 Migrant background descriptives**

The migrant background categories presented in 4.3.1 are built upon two main elements and one refining element of foreign background, which each correspond to a binary consideration: having another mother tongue than Finland's official languages, having moved to Finland, and having another citizenship than Finnish citizenship. Adjustments by duration of residence for foreign-born children who moved to Finland before school age was carried out in preparation of the analysis. I will first present the elements of migrant background separately and then the analytical categories created under "Migrant background". The descriptive statistics will allow us to evaluate at a glance the foreign makeup of the audience, which will reveal whether the Kaikkien Vaalit event series' objective of a mixed audience in terms of migrant background was accomplished.

Firstly, the classification by mother tongue (Table 2) indicates that over half of the respondents who provided information about their mother tongue were not native Finnish, Swedish or Sami speakers. With the inclusion of individuals with Swedish background who, contrary to Finland Swedes, have moved to Finland, and the observation made in 4.3.1 about the likely overreporting of Finnish as mother tongue when understood as official registered mother tongue rather than parents' language, it can be advanced that the Kaikkien Vaalit campaign reached very well its objective of including participants of immigrant background while enabling dialogue with the nearly equally high participation of Finnish-background attendees.

Table 2: Sample description by mother tongue

<i>Mother tongue</i>		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Finnish	95	43.6
	Swedish	12	5.5
	Sami	1	.5
	Other language	110	50.5
	Total	218	100.0
Missing	System	7	
Total		225	

Among the 110 respondents who provided information about another mother tongue than Finnish, Swedish and Sami, 45 indicated Somali as a mother tongue and 14 Russian, follow by English and by a combination of Persia, Dari and Farsi with each 9 respondents. Altogether, around 30 languages were represented.

Table 3: Sample description by experience of migration to Finland

<i>Move to Finland</i>		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	I did not move to Finland	112	52.1
	(Provided a reason for move to Finland)	103	47.9
	Total	215	100.0
Missing	System	10	
Total		225	

Again, close to half of the respondents report having moved to Finland (47.9%). Among those who have moved to Finland, the mean duration of stay is 9.6385 years with several outliers; the median duration of residence is five years. From the practitioner's perspective, contrary to the 2015 tour, where by design the project's specific target group had no possibility to vote, the event series attracted overwhelmingly individuals with the right to vote: three respondents under two years of residence, six at two years; depending on whether the arrival date and the date of declaration of residents has happened a full two years ago or not, between 3.8% and 11.4% of the audience was without voting rights at local elections).

Additional information included in the questionnaire placed family reunification (36.9%) and humanitarian protection (33.0%) as the two main declared reasons of

move, before studies (9.7%) and work (8.7%) work. 4.9% of respondents declared being Finnish returnees, and the other 6.8% provided other or multiple reasons.

Table 4: Sample description by Finnish or other citizenship

<i>Finnish and other citizenships</i>		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Only Finnish citizenship	140	65.1
	Finnish citizenship as well as another or former other citizenship	14	6.5
	Only other or former citizenship	61	28.4
	Total	215	100.0
Missing	System	10	
Total		225	

A large majority of respondents declared having only a Finnish citizenship (65.1%), with 6.5% a dual citizenship or another, former citizenship. Citizenship itself is an important refining criteria when it comes to examining political engagement by voting in elections other than the municipal elections, but it is not in itself a suitable criterion to determine the migration experience of subjects, as the possibility of dual citizenship is limited for a number of countries.

The elements of migration background provide separately three separate pictures of the audience from different angles. Recoding into migrant background categories allows to generate a much more relevant picture of the sample when it comes to understanding who attended the Kaikkien Vaalit events.

Table 5: Sample description by composite migrant background categories

<i>Migrant background categories</i>		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Immigrant	56	26.8
	Naturalized	37	17.7
	Second generation	8	3.8
	Finnish-background returnee	5	2.4
	Native Finn	103	49.3
	Total	209	100.0
Missing	System	16	
Total		225	

Among the respondents who informed the variables used to compose the migrant background variable, the proportion of “native Finns” (n = 103, 49.3%), the only category without either migration experience or foreign background, corresponds to the observations made earlier; more detail, however, is available for the categories having some extent of migrant background. Half of the respondents with at least one element of migrant background are classified as “immigrants” (n = 56) and a third of them are “naturalized” citizens (n = 37). The “second generation” category is very underrepresented, most likely due to the inclusion of many Finland-born individuals from parents with foreign background into the “native Finns” category; in a similar manner, Finnish returnees are very few, although the discrepancy between the “second generation” count and the observations made during data collection has not been observed for Finnish returnees. Finally, the Other category, which was created to account for marginal cases where Swedish background and belonging to Finland’s Swedish-speaking minority could not be distinguished based on the provided information, did not include any cases, which confirmed the validity of the categorization recoding procedure.

Additional observations based on the questionnaire data provided the distribution in terms of years lived in Finland, for those who moved from another country, visible in Table 6. Half of the respondents who moved to Finland declared having lived in Finland less than six years (51.3%), while three in ten (29.5%) had lived for more than 16 years. It is important to note that these figures include also Finnish returnees: they are representing 4.9% of the indicated immigration reasons, against 36.9% for family reunification (Table 7).

Table 6: Time lived in Finland, for respondents with experience of migration to Finland

<i>Time lived in Finland</i>		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	1-2 years	10	12.8
	3-5 years	30	38.5
	6-9 years	10	12.8
	10-15 years	5	6.4
	16+ years	23	29.5
	Total	78	100.0

Table 7: Reason for moving to Finland, for respondents with experience of migration to Finland

<i>Reason for moving to Finland</i>		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Opiskelu	10	9.7
	Työ	9	8.7
	Perheside	38	36.9
	Humanitäärinen	34	33.0
	Paluumuutto	5	4.9
	Muu	7	6.8
	Total	103	100.0

### 5.1.2 Socio-economic indicators

In order to provide a portrait of the attendance of the Kaikkien Vaalit events, I shall present the socio-economic features of the respondents, both for the sample as a whole, and by migrant background category. The information is presented using crosstabulation, for which respondents who did not provide answers for either of the two variables are excluded.

Table 8: Sample description by gender and migrant background categories

Gender, whole sample and by migrant background category								
			Migrant background categories					
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	Finnish-background returnee	Native Finn	Total
Gender	Male	Count	31	25	1	1	31	89
		% within group	56.4%	67.6%	16.7%	25.0%	32.0%	44.7%
		% of Total	15.6%	12.6%	0.5%	0.5%	15.6%	44.7%
	Female	Count	24	12	5	3	65	109
		% within group	43.6%	32.4%	83.3%	75.0%	67.0%	54.8%
		% of Total	12.1%	6.0%	2.5%	1.5%	32.7%	54.8%
	Other	Count	0	0	0	0	1	1
		% within group	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.5%
		% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Total		Count	55	37	6	4	97	199
		% of Total	27.6%	18.6%	3.0%	2.0%	48.7%	100.0%

Women, as during the 2015 Kaikkien Vaalit tour, are slightly more represented among respondents (n = 109, 54.8%), but the distinction is clear between the Immigrant and Naturalized groups on the one hand and the other groups: they represent only 43.6% of the Immigrant group and 32.4% of the Naturalized groups, against 67% among the Native Finn group, and respectively five of six and three of four in the Second generation and Returnee groups.

Table 9: Sample description by age categories and migrant background categories

*Age categories for whole sample and by migrant background categories*

			Migrant background group					
			Finnish-					
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	background returnee	Native Finn	Total
Age								
Under 24 y.o.	Count		11	7	6	2	5	31
	% within group		19.7%	18.9%	75.0%	40.0%	4.9%	14.9%
	% of Total		5.3%	3.4%	2.9%	1.0%	2.4%	14.9%
25-34 y.o.	Count		22	6	2	1	9	40
	% within group		39.3%	16.2%	25.0%	20.0%	8.8%	19.2%
	% of Total		10.6%	2.9%	1.0%	0.5%	4.3%	19.2%
35-54 y.o.	Count		21	20	0	1	36	78
	% within group		37.5%	54.1%	0.0%	20.0%	35.3%	37.5%
	% of Total		10.1%	9.6%	0.0%	0.5%	17.3%	37.5%
55-69 y.o.	Count		2	3	0	1	42	48
	% within group		3.6%	8.1%	0.0%	20.0%	41.2%	23.1%
	% of Total		1.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.5%	20.2%	23.1%
70+ y.o.	Count		0	1	0	0	10	11
	% within group		0.0%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%	5.3%
	% of Total		0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	5.3%
Total	Count		56	37	8	5	102	208
	% within group		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		26.9%	17.8%	3.8%	2.4%	49.0%	100.0%

The median age of the respondents in the whole sample is 44 years old, with the 35-54-year-old category representing 37.5% of valid answers and a standard deviation of 16.139 years. Again, there is a high variation between groups: from a median age of 20.5 years for the Second generation and 27 for the Finnish-background returnees, to 32 years old for the Immigrant category, 42 years old for the Naturalized category and 56 or the Native Finn category.

Table 10: Family situation of respondents

*Family situation, whole sample and by migrant background category*

			Migrant background categories					
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	Finnish-background returnee	Native Finns	Total
Family situation	Unmarried / Single	Count	19	7	7	3	23	59
		% in group	33.9%	18.9%	100.0%	75.0%	22.5%	28.6%
		% of Total	9.2%	3.4%	3.4%	1.5%	11.2%	28.6%
	Married / Civil union	Count	28	22	0	1	50	101
		% in group	50.0%	59.5%	0.0%	25.0%	49.0%	49.0%
		% of Total	13.6%	10.7%	0.0%	0.5%	24.3%	49.0%
	Cohabiting	Count	4	4	0	0	13	21
		% in group	7.1%	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	12.7%	10.2%
		% of Total	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	10.2%
	Divorced	Count	4	4	0	0	13	21
		% in group	7.1%	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	12.7%	10.2%
		% of Total	1.9%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	10.2%
	Widowed	Count	1	0	0	0	3	4
		% in group	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	1.9%
		% of Total	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.9%
Total	Count	56	37	7	4	102	206	
	% in group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	27.2%	18.0%	3.4%	1.9%	49.5%	100.0%	

At a glance, the family situation seems fairly homogeneous between groups with a significant count. Cohabiting, divorced and widowed are more frequent in the Native Finns group than in other groups; the two latter may be more likely considering the age distribution within the group; if half of the Immigrant category members is married or in a registered partnership, nearly six in then Naturalized respondents are, which may be connected to practical reasons regarding migration such as legal status.

Table 11: School-age children, whole sample and immigrant background categories

*School-age children, whole sample and by immigrant background categories*

			Migrant background categories					
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	Finnish-background		Total
						returnee	Native Finn	
School-age children	No children	Count	24	14	5	3	80	126
		% in group	44.4%	40.0%	100.0%	60.0%	78.4%	62.7%
		% of Total	11.9%	7.0%	2.5%	1.5%	39.8%	62.7%
	1-4 children	Count	23	18	0	2	22	65
		% in group	42.6%	51.4%	0.0%	40.0%	21.6%	32.3%
		% of Total	11.4%	9.0%	0.0%	1.0%	10.9%	32.3%
	5-9 children	Count	7	3	0	0	0	10
		% in group	13.0%	8.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
		% of Total	3.5%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Total		Count	54	35	5	5	102	201
		% in group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	26.9%	17.4%	2.5%	2.5%	50.7%	100.0%

A total of 37.3% of respondents indicated having school-age children. While the number of children in the Native Finn category is of little relevance here and can be explained by the age distribution in the Native Finn group, since only children under 18 years old are considered, it can be noted that a majority of respondents in the Immigrant group (55.6%) and Naturalized group (60%) have at least one child in school age.

The education level of respondents (Table 12) is an average of 13.64 years spent studying, corresponding to lower secondary education; with over a third of the provided answers, the number of respondents reporting more than 17 years of studies, which usually corresponds to doctoral-level studies, is unusually high. The likelihood of education throughout adult life in Finland, as well as re-education of migrants coming to Finland to acquire recognized qualifications, could be an explanatory factor. However, the Immigrant category counts 46% of respondents declaring having studied only one to six years; the difference in education systems, including starting compulsory age, as well as different understandings of what “studying” and “being in school” means, likely contributes as well. All in all, the categorization of education level by years studied may therefore not be suitable to conduct analyses related to real-life education level or precise qualification.



Table 12: Education level of respondents, by category

<i>Education level</i>		Migrant background categories					Total	
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	Finnish-background returnee	Native Finn	
Education level (years studied)	None (0)	Count	1	0	0	0	1	2
		% group	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.0%
		% of Total	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.0%
	Folk school (1-6)	Count	23	6	2	0	2	33
		% group	46.0%	17.6%	40.0%	0.0%	2.0%	16.9%
		% of Total	11.8%	3.1%	1.0%	0.0%	1.0%	16.9%
	Primary school (7-9)	Count	2	5	0	0	5	12
		% group	4.0%	14.7%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	6.2%
		% of Total	1.0%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	6.2%
	High school, 2nd degree, vocational (10-11)	Count	1	2	0	0	6	9
		% group	2.0%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	4.6%
		% of Total	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	4.6%
	AMK, lower secondary (12-14)	Count	6	3	2	2	19	32
		% group	12.0%	8.8%	40.0%	40.0%	18.8%	16.4%
		% of Total	3.1%	1.5%	1.0%	1.0%	9.7%	16.4%
	Higher secondary (15-16)	Count	6	7	0	0	21	34
		% group	12.0%	20.6%	0.0%	0.0%	20.8%	17.4%
		% of Total	3.1%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	10.8%	17.4%
	Doctoral level, multiple degrees (17+)	Count	11	11	1	3	47	73
		% group	22.0%	32.4%	20.0%	60.0%	46.5%	37.4%
		% of Total	5.6%	5.6%	0.5%	1.5%	24.1%	37.4%
Total	Count	50	34	5	5	101	195	
	% group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	25.6%	17.4%	2.6%	2.6%	51.8%	100.0%	

Table 13: Occupation of respondents

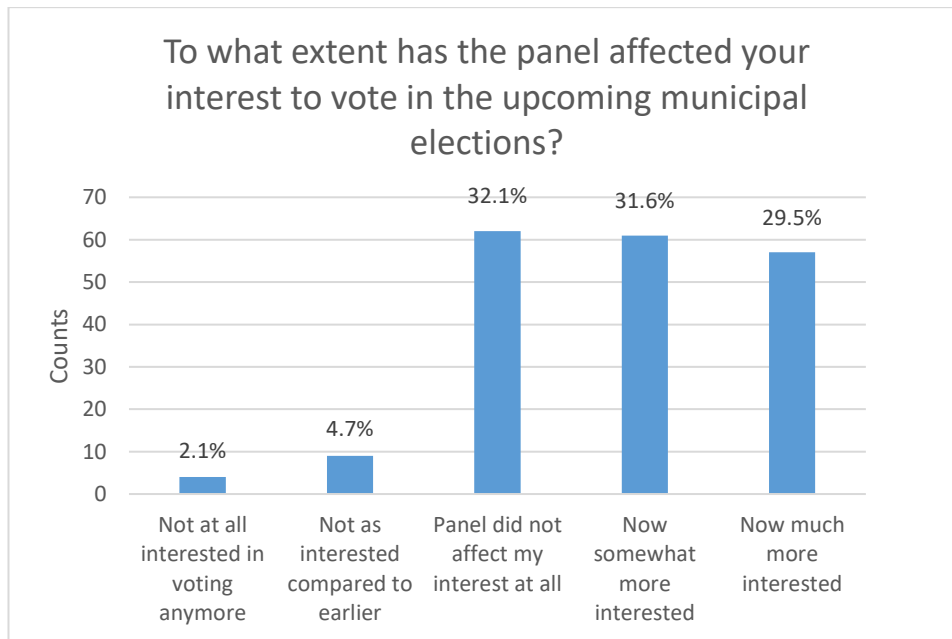
			Migrant background categories					Total
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	Finnish-background returnee	Native Finn	
Occupation	Employed	Count	3	20	1	3	49	76
		% in group	5.5%	54.1%	12.5%	60.0%	47.6%	36.5%
		% of Total	1.4%	9.6%	0.5%	1.4%	23.6%	36.5%
	Un-employed	Count	8	3	0	0	7	18
		% in group	14.5%	8.1%	0.0%	0.0%	6.8%	8.7%
		% of Total	3.8%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	8.7%
	Student	Count	39	6	7	1	6	59
		% in group	70.9%	16.2%	87.5%	20.0%	5.8%	28.4%
		% of Total	18.8%	2.9%	3.4%	0.5%	2.9%	28.4%
	Retired	Count	0	1	0	0	26	27
		% in group	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	25.2%	13.0%
		% of Total	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	13.0%
	Self-employed	Count	0	3	0	0	8	11
		% in group	0.0%	8.1%	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%	5.3%
		% of Total	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	5.3%
	Other and more than one answer	Count	5	4	0	1	7	9
		% in group	9.1%	10.8%	0.0%	20.0%	6.8%	8.2%
		% of Total	2.4%	1.9%	0.0%	0.5%	3.3%	8.2%
Total	Count		55	37	8	5	103	208
	% in group		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100%	100%
	% of Total		26.4%	17.8%	3.8%	2.4%	49.5%	100%

When it comes to occupation (Table 13), most respondents were either employed (36.5%) or studying (28.4%). The representation of students among the audience of the panels can be explained by the cooperation with educational institutes at the local level, who sent student groups, including Finnish as a second language groups with their teachers to attend the event: 70.9% of the Immigrant group and seven in eight Second generation group members declared being a student. The difference between the Immigrant (5.5%) and the Naturalized group (54.1%) in terms of employment is also significant, which is likely to be connected to the duration of stay in Finland and Finnish language proficiency (a requirement for Finnish citizenship) as a corollary.

### 5.1.3 Outcome variables

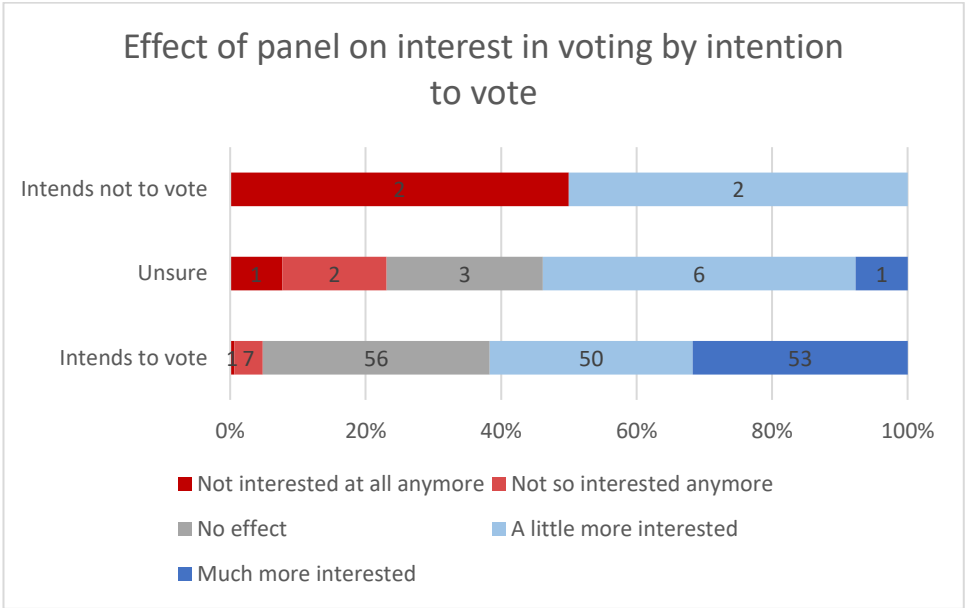
For dependent variables on an equivalent of a Likert scale, visual representation provides to make several important observations.

Figure 2: To what extent has the panel affected your interest to vote in the upcoming municipal elections?



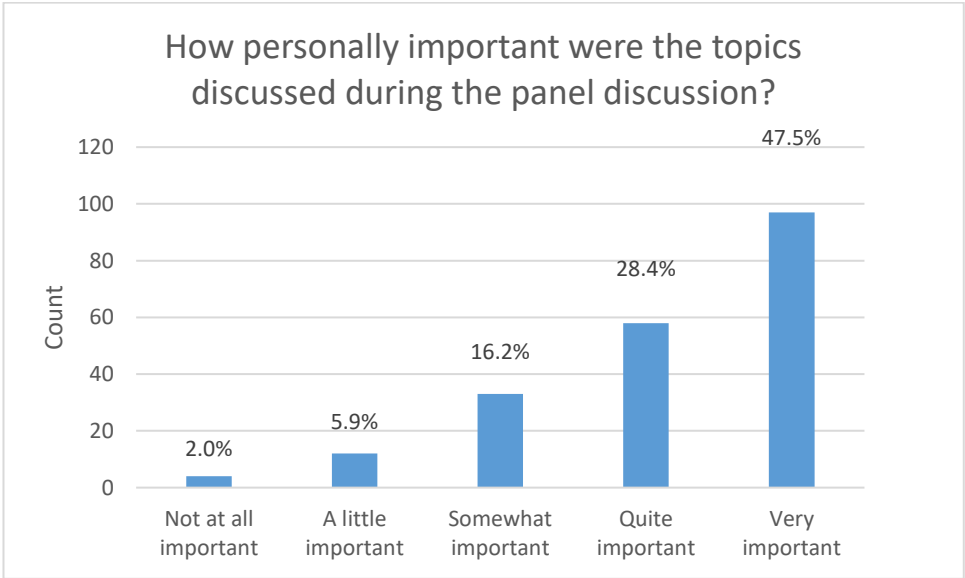
A first observation can be made about the panel's effect on the respondent's interest in the election. As visible in Figure 2, the effect of the panel was reported to be insignificant to very positive by the attendees who filled the survey. The Kaikkien Vaalit events can be assumed to achieve their objective of increasing the interest of their attendees towards the election. The mean answer for the question was 3.81, close to "I am now somewhat more interested to vote". Only 7% reported a negative effect of the panel, while 60.8% reported a moderate or strongly positive effect on their interest.

Figure 3: Effect of panel on interest in voting by intention to vote



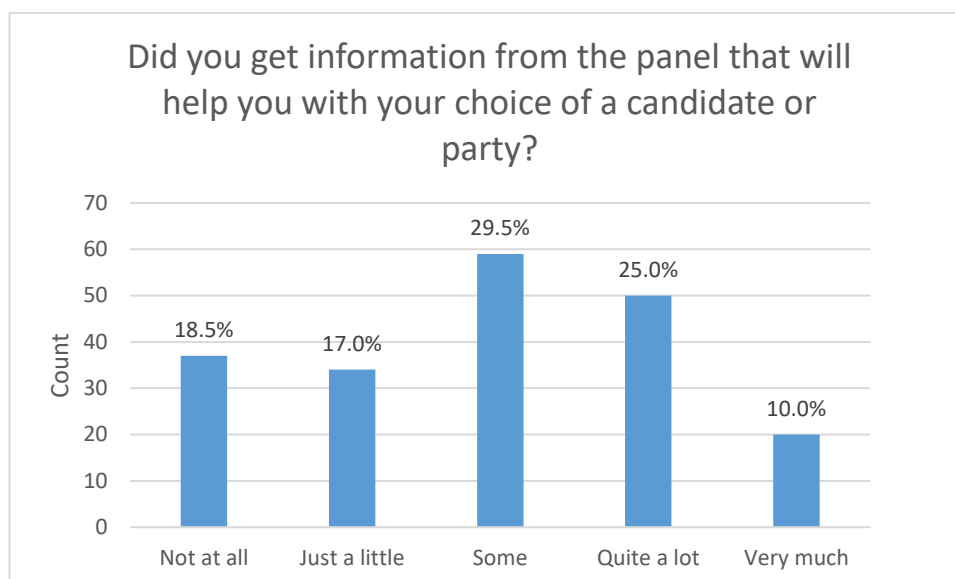
As visible in Figure 3, looking at the distribution of effect on interest in voting by intention or desire to vote, the Unsure category reported no effect to a rather positive effect; however, further analysis of these results cannot be conclusive for the reasons mentioned in section 5.2.4.

Figure 4: “How personally important were the topics discussed during the panel discussion?”



The personal importance of the issues discussed during the events (Figure 4), as set in the instructions sent to the events’ local organisers, received a mean score of 4.15. Close to half of the respondents evaluated the issues discussed as personally “very important”.

Figure 5: “Did you get information from the panel that will help you with your choice of a candidate or party?”



The effect is less clear in terms of the usefulness of the information acquired by respondents during the panel (Figure 5) with a mean close to the middle option (“Some” information, as opposed to “Not at all” and “Very much”) at 2.91. Depending on how *positive* is defined, the effect is either limited with nearly as many attendees having learned little or no useful information at all than attendees having learnt quite a lot or very much useful information, or positive with four in five respondents (81.3%) reported having obtained at least a rather small amount of useful information rather than none at all.

#### 5.1.4 Other elements from data

While the rest of the questionnaire offers a trove of information which could be used to refine the analysis, it is necessary to concentrate on the information most closely related to the problem at hand. This involves to leave aside activity in associations, interest for the news about politics and active citizenship profile as a whole. Additionally, the distribution of answers for the intention to vote creates too small samples to infer conclusions with regards to previous voting activity. However, the intention to vote per group provides important insights.

Table 14: Intention and desire to vote at the 2017 municipal elections

Intention and desire to vote at the 2017 municipal elections								
			Migrant background groups					Total
			Finnish-					
			Immigrant	Naturalized	Second generation	background returnee	Native Finn	
Intention to vote or desire to vote if no voting rights	Planning to	Count	50	35	6	4	99	194
	vote OR	% in group	81.9%	94.6%	85.7%	80.0%	97.1%	91.5%
	would vote	% of Total	23.6%	16.5%	2.4%	1.9%	46.7%	91.5%
	if could							
	I do not	Count	9	1	0	1	3	14
	know yet	% in group	14.8%	2.7%	0.0%	20.0%	2.9%	6.6%
		% of Total	4.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	1.4%	6.6%
	Wouldn't	Count	2	1	1	0	0	4
	vote even if	% in group	3.3%	2.7%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
	could OR	% of Total	0.9%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
not planning								
to vote								
Total		Count	61	37	7	5	102	212
		% in group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0	100.0
							%	%
		% of Total	28.8%	17.5%	3.3%	2.4%	48.1%	100.0
							%	

While the overwhelming majority of respondents declared they were planning or would like to vote at the municipal elections (91.5%, for a final turnout at the election of less than 60%), and very few announced planning not to vote (1.9% of the total), the distribution is significantly different between the groups. Excluding categories with too few respondents to draw conclusions, respectively 94.6% and 97.1% of native Finns and naturalized respondents declared they were planning to vote (unsure to vote at respectively 2.7% and 2.9%), against 82% intending or willing to vote and 14.8% unsure individuals for the immigrant group.

## 5.2 Variation in the effect between migrant background categories

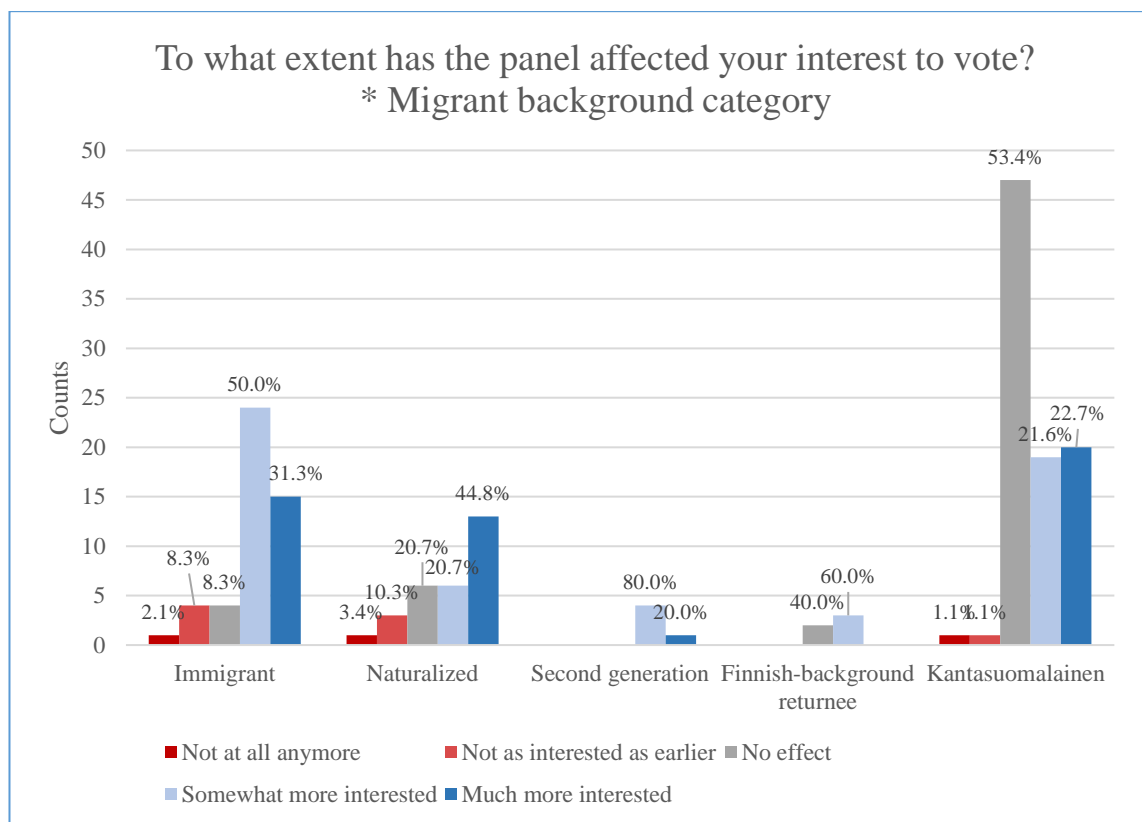
Is the observed positive effect on interest towards voting and the relatability of discussed topics, as well as the mildly positive effect on acquisition of useful information, the same whether a respondent has moved to Finland or not? In the following sections, I will look at the variation in outcome variables between migrant

background groups, and, should the migrant background variable not be an adequate explanatory variable, I will investigate whether other data presented earlier may shed more light on the result.

### 5.3.1 Interest variable

The interest variable evaluated whether the panel had an immediate effect on the respondents' interest in voting.

Figure 6: Effect of panel on interest in voting at upcoming elections by migrant background category

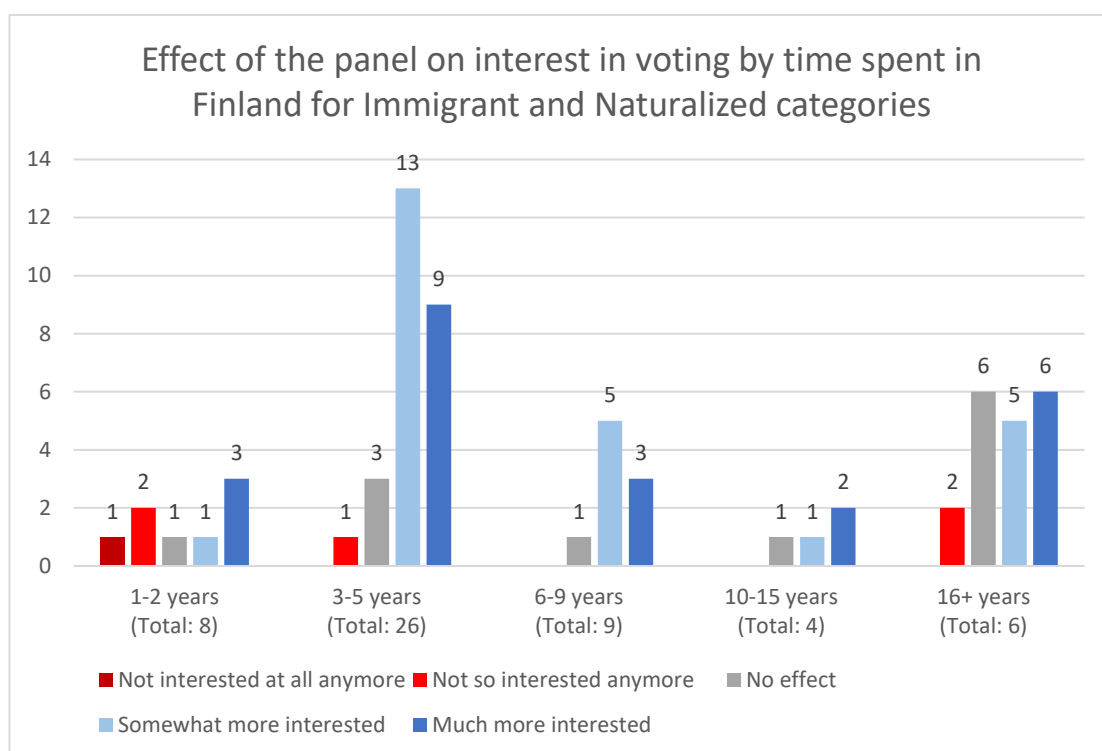


At a first glance at the visualisation of the reported effect of the panel on the interest in voting in the municipal elections (Figure 6), the “native Finn” group is distinguished by how strongly the “no effect” choice is represented in comparison to other groups. In both the Immigrant and Naturalized groups, the effect is overwhelmingly positive: 81.3% are more interested in total for the Immigrant group and 65.5% for the Naturalized group, against 44.3% of total positive effect in the Native Finn group.

An explanatory hypothesis for the relative absence of effect of the panel on native Finns could be found in voting as a habit, and in the political culture of the country stressing

the moral duty to vote, which would both lead to shift the decision to vote or not outside of the realm of the debate rather than depending on interest in the current election. This is further supported by the results presented in 5.1.4 about the very high proportion of respondents with the intention to vote among the Native Finn group. However, among the Naturalized group, which also had a high proportion of voting intention, respondents who declared being much more interested in voting represent the highest share among the group, which shows high voting intention and progression of interest are not mutually exclusive.

Figure 7: Effect of the panel on interest in voting by time spent in Finland for Immigrant and Naturalized categories



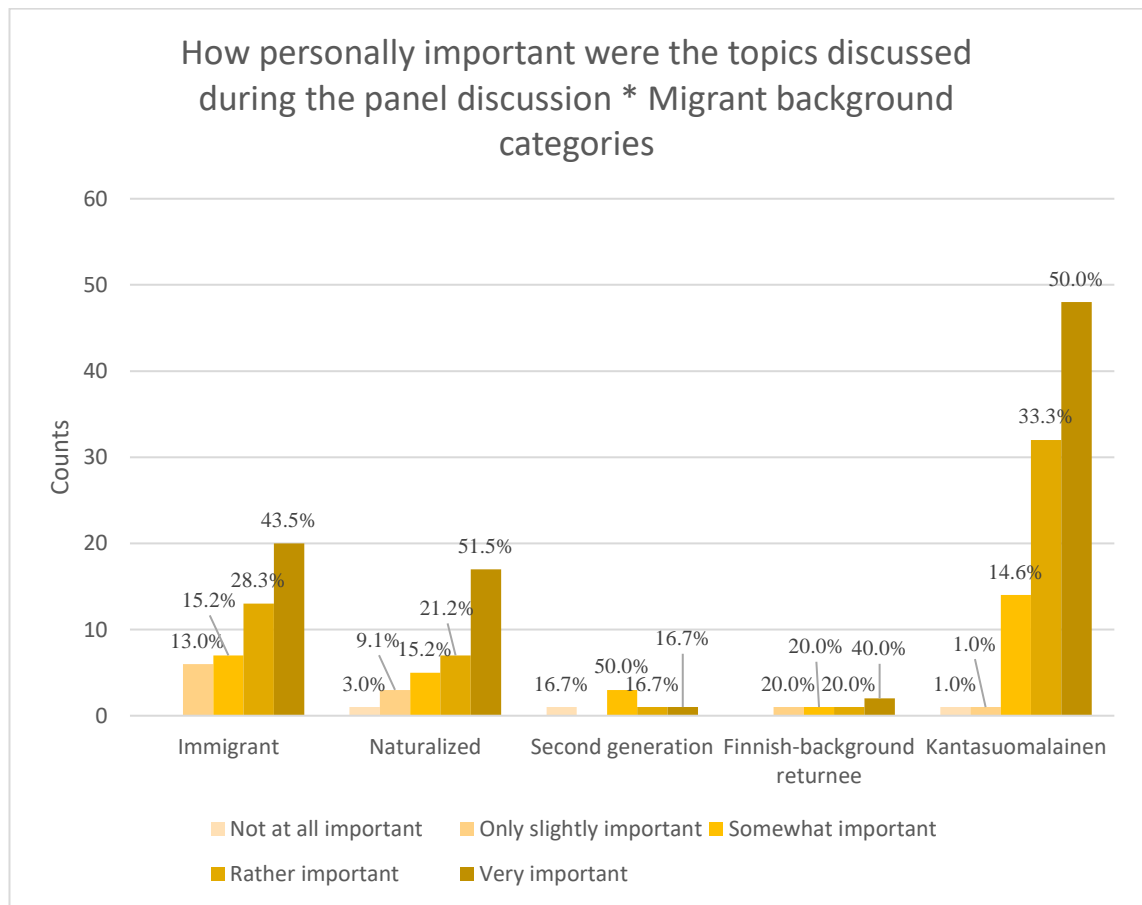
Among foreign background residents with the experience of moving to Finland, the positive effect of the panel is strongly accentuated for those who have lived for three to nine years after moving to Finland, while the proportion of “no effect” increases steadily with time spent in Finland (Figure 7); the distribution among residents who lived over 15 years in Finland is very similar to the average distribution as presented in Figure 2, which could be explained by acculturation.



### 5.2.2 Importance variable

The importance variable, while not an “effect” of the panel as such, evaluates how personally important, or how relatable the issues discussed were for the respondent, be it in general or to their personal situation (for example, the experience of migration) or own interests (for example, concern about increased immigration).

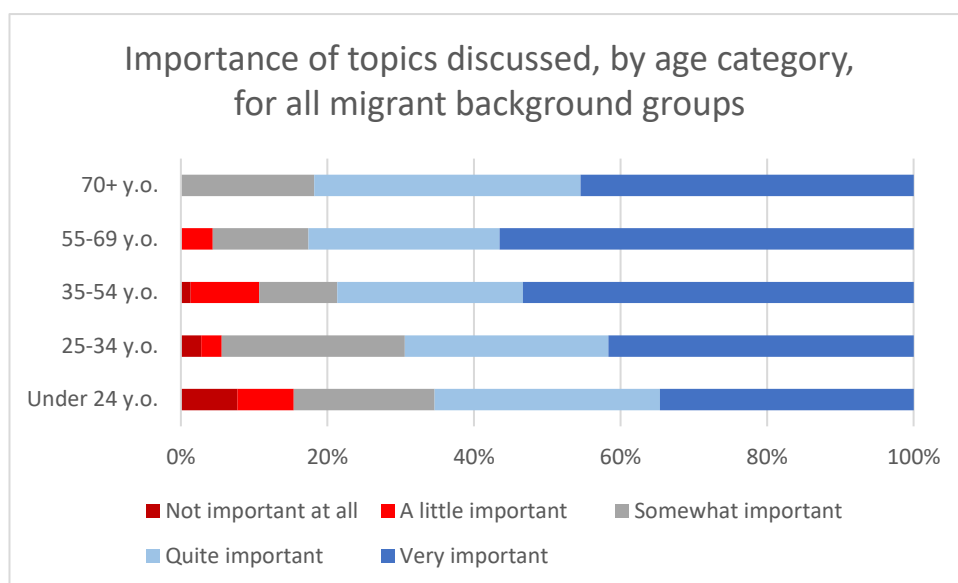
Figure 8: Personal importance of discussed issues for respondent by migrant background group



The distribution of the relevance of discussed issues (Figure 8) does not seem, at first glance, to have a different pattern in certain groups compared to others. Half of all Native Finn and Naturalized respondents choose the highest possible option, while Immigrant respondents were on average slightly more reserved in their evaluation, although still 71.8% of them considered the topics discussed as rather or very important. While it would be ill-advised to draw conclusions on a such as small number of respondents, one can wonder if the lack of enthusiasm for the topics discussed among the second generation can be related to the average age of respondents in the group.

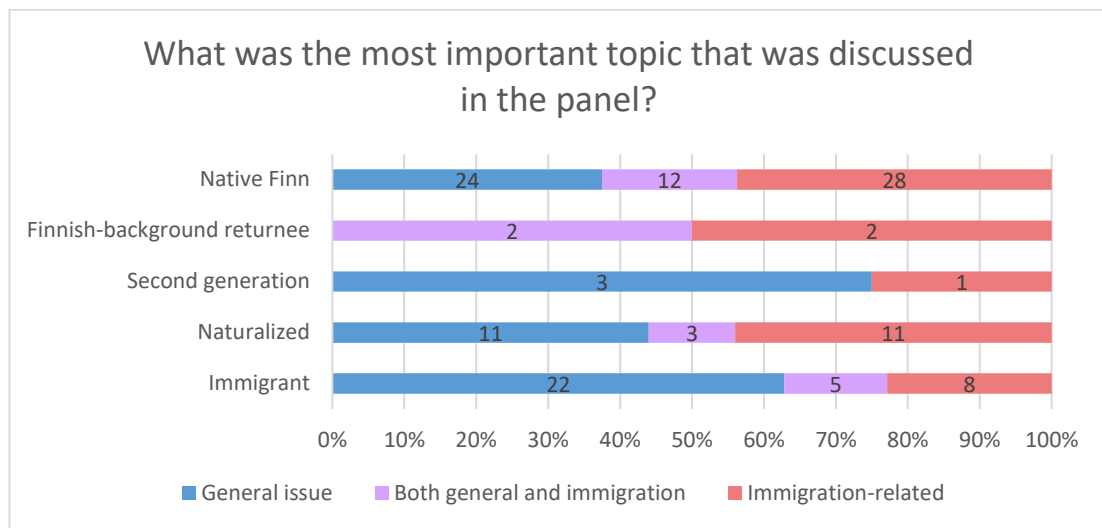
Indeed, looking at the distribution of answer by age group in the whole sample (Figure 9), the personal importance of the issues discussed increases with age. While this can reflect the higher participation in general of older people, this may also be interpreted as a failure for the events to address issues of interest for the youth.

Figure 9: Importance of topics discussed, by age category, for all migrant background groups



Respondents were also asked to indicate what was in their opinion the most important issue discussed in the panel as an open question. While an in-depth analysis of the answers provided falls beyond the scope of this work, they were succinctly recoded depending on whether the indicated most important issues were directly connected to immigration (“immigrants”, “refugees”) or were issues considered as general (“jobs”, “democracy”) and affecting anyone in the Finnish society. Additionally, some answers contained several issues covering both categories, or one issue which could be understood as either (“language”, “discrimination”). Interestingly, the second generation group, followed by the Immigrant groups, considered general issues more important in the discussion than immigration-specific ones. The distribution of answers in the Naturalized and Native Finns groups is also very similar (Figure 10).

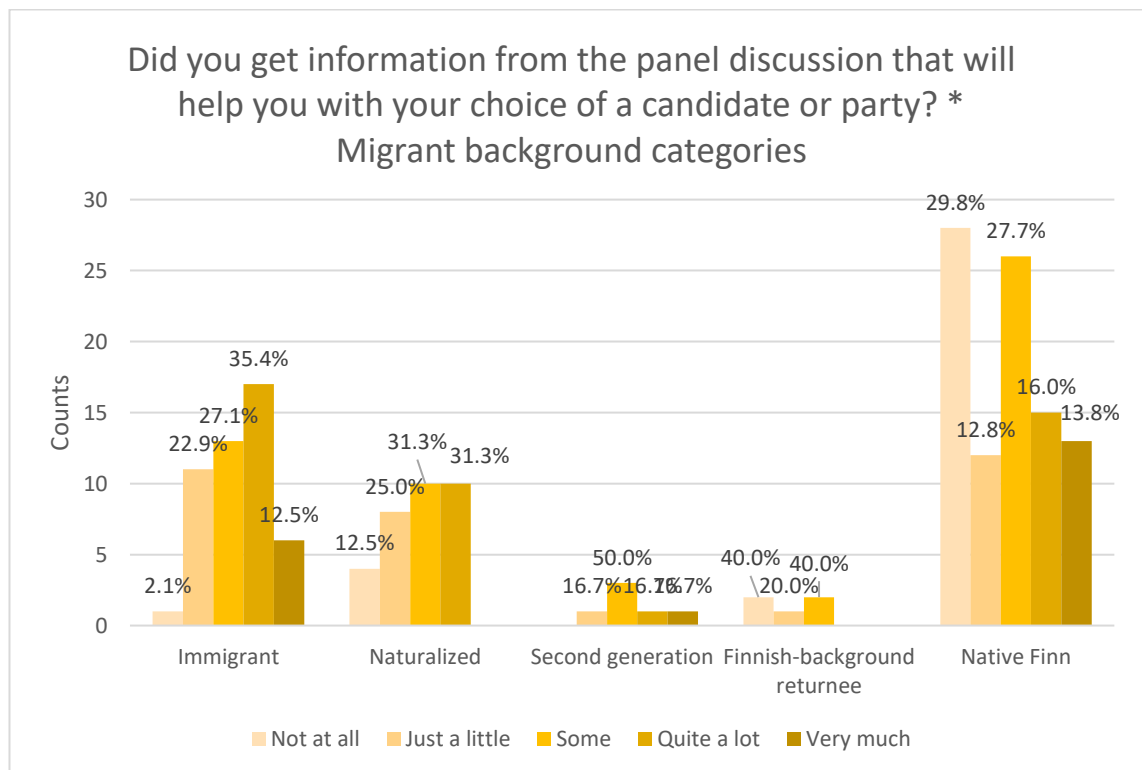
Figure 10: Most important discussed issue by migrant background group.



### 5.2.3 Information variable

The information variable evaluates whether or how much the respondent felt having gained information that could be used to guide a choice of candidate or party.

Figure 11: Gaining useful information for a choice of candidate or party



While the results of the Importance variable had a clear shape that was not visibly distinct between groups, the distribution of answers for the Information variable (Figure

11) does not present a specific pattern, either in general or between groups. As for the Interest variable, the Native Finn category is distinguished by a higher proportion of lack of effect compared to other options.

Looking at duration of stay (Figure 12), the result is more positive for those arrived three to 15 years before than for those who migrated to Finland over 16 years ago and less than two years ago. The former, after more time spent in Finland, may be already more knowledgeable about the political parties and programmes, to the point of not learning anything new from the discussion; for those who have lived less than two years in Finland, language proficiency may come into play to make it difficult to learn new information due to a poor comprehension of the conversation. Similarly, considering age categories in the whole sample (Figure 13), older people seemed to have gained less useful information from the panel than younger people, which corroborates the observation regarding duration of stay in Finland.

Figure 12: Information variable by duration of stay, if immigrated to Finland

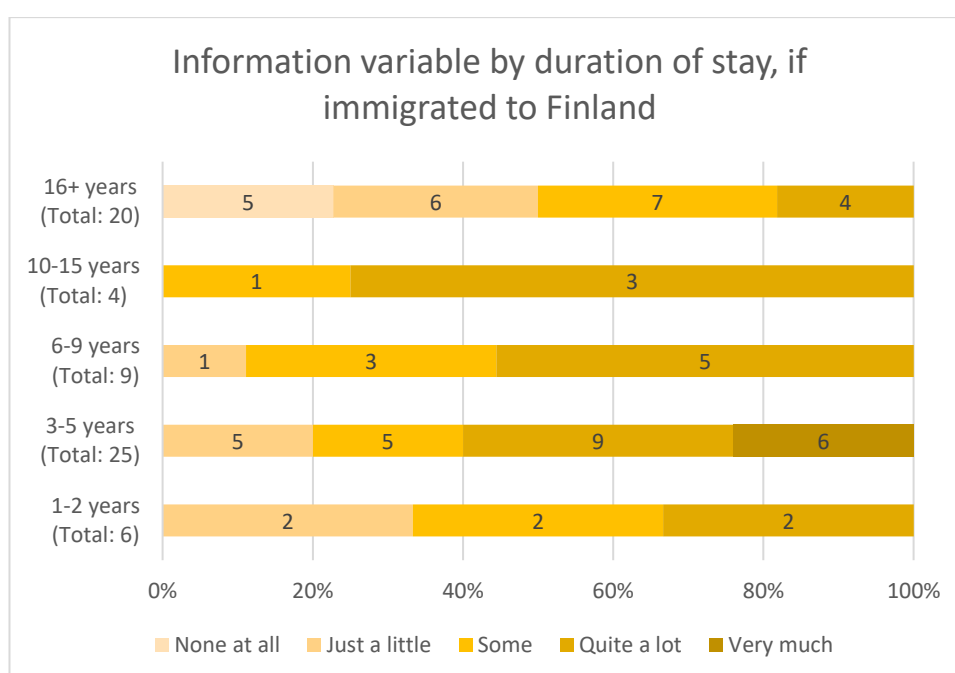
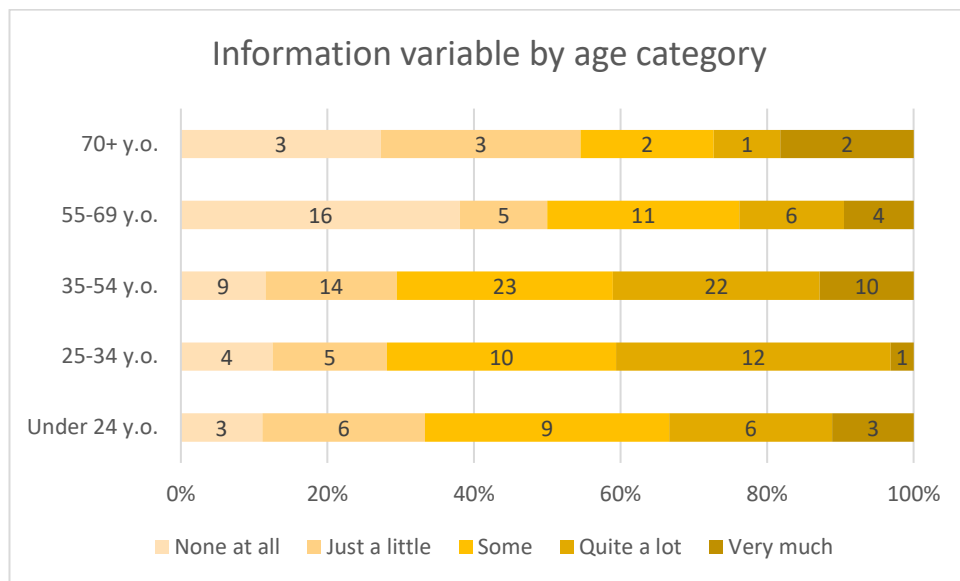


Figure 13: Information variable by age category



### 5.3 Relevance of categorization

Based on visual examination of the three dependent variables in connection with the migrant background categories, the distribution of answers seemed to lend credence to the categorization in terms of the panel's effect on interest in voting. However, for the Importance and Information variables, the visual analysis does not allow to draw a conclusion. Complementary analysis combining other information included in the questionnaire hint that time, be it absolute age or time spent in Finland, may intervene in the results as a factor of particular importance when considering the process of acculturation. The scope of the data limits greatly the possibilities for more advanced statistical analysis, including regression, which would allow to thoroughly evaluate the relative weight of predictors. Focusing instead on the difference between groups as a marker of the relevance of event design to its target group, the objective of the following sections will be to answer the research question itself by testing the suitability of the operated migrant background categorization. Test choices will be explained in corresponding sections.

#### 5.3.1 Kruskal-Wallis H test for differences between groups

While other tests were considered, the Kruskal-Wallis H test for differences between groups was chosen. For one dependent variable (each outcome variable is tested

separately) and one independent variable which contains more than two groups, chi square test, Kruskal-Wallis H test and one-way ANOVA are reasonable options; however, the nature of the dependent variables (non-normal data) excludes one-way ANOVA, which requires a dependent variable of continuous nature, and makes Kruskal-Wallis H test a better option than chi square, due to the ordinal rather than categorical nature of the dependent variables, which are all Likert scales or equivalents. Furthermore, the size of the sample and the distribution of answers strengthen the case against chi square test, which would require at least five of each possible answer for the variables. In order to conserve the ordinal value of the dependent variables and avoid extensive recoding of variables which would lower the level of detail in the data, Kruskal-Wallis H test was selected. Both study design and data respected the first assumptions for the test: Groups are independent from each other, as each respondent was added to a single group and surveyed only once. The test was run independently for each outcome variable, with a statistical significance threshold at .05, and 95% confidence. The null hypothesis is, for all variables (henceforth referred to as Interest, Importance and Information variables), that there are no differences in the distribution of answers for the questions determining the three outcome variables depending on belonging to a migrant background group. The test was decided upon and carried out using the Laerd Statistics online resources (2016, 2015a) in addition to reading of studies using various statistical tests. The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H test run are presented by outcome variable below.

The p-value (compared to .05 for statistical significance) was  $p = .046$  ( $H(4) = 9.712$ ) for the Interest variable,  $p = .149$  ( $H(4) = 6.762$ ) for the Importance variable and  $p = .028$  ( $H(4) = 10.889$ ) for the Information variable. Null hypothesis was retained for the Importance variable, meaning that the migrant background category of the respondent did not significantly affect how important the issues discussed were deemed.

Null hypothesis was rejected for the interest in elections and the acquisition of useful information variables, meaning that the categorization by migrant groups is relevant for these variables. However, the p-value, while below the significance level, is in both cases close to .05, meaning that a few additional cases would swing the p-value either side of the statistical significance level. For example, running the test with listwise exclusion in order to cover an exactly similar sample moved the p-value over the threshold for the Interest and Importance variables.

A visual assessment of the distribution of answers in each group and for each variable obtained by running a test of means revealed that, however, the shape of the distribution varied greatly for all dependent variables, which fails the last requirement for the Kruskal-Wallis H test. The examination of the mean ranks in each group for each variable (Table 8) reveals noteworthy differences. Leaving aside groups with a too low number of members to be relevant to the analysis (Second generation and Finnish-background returnee with each  $n = 5$ ), a gap can be observed between the “Native Finns” group (mean rank = 77.59) on the one hand and the “Immigrant” (mean rank = 100.52) and “Naturalized” (mean rank = 97.40) groups on the other for the Interest variable. Still using categories with significant counts, the scores increase between the “Immigrant” (mean rank = 87.83), “Naturalized” (mean rank = 93.92) and “Native Finns” category (mean rank = 99.50) for the personal importance of issues, and conversely decrease for the acquisition of information, from “Immigrant” (mean rank = 111.09) to “Naturalized” (mean rank = 90.09) to “Native Finns” (mean rank = 85.66).

Table 15: Kruskal-Wallis H test, omparison of mean ranks

<i>Ranks</i>			
	Migrant background categories	N	Mean Rank
How did the panel affect interest in the election	Immigrant	48	100.52
	Naturalized	29	97.40
	Second generation	5	109.00
	Finnish-background returnee	5	75.50
	Native Finn	88	77.59
	Total	175	
Importance of discussed issues for respondent	Immigrant	46	87.83
	Naturalized	33	93.92
	Second generation	6	50.75
	Finnish-background returnee	5	79.00
	Native Finn	96	99.50
	Total	186	
Got useful information to make a choice	Immigrant	48	111.09
	Naturalized	32	90.09
	Second generation	6	109.67
	Finnish-background returnee	5	55.80
	Native Finn	94	85.66
	Total	185	

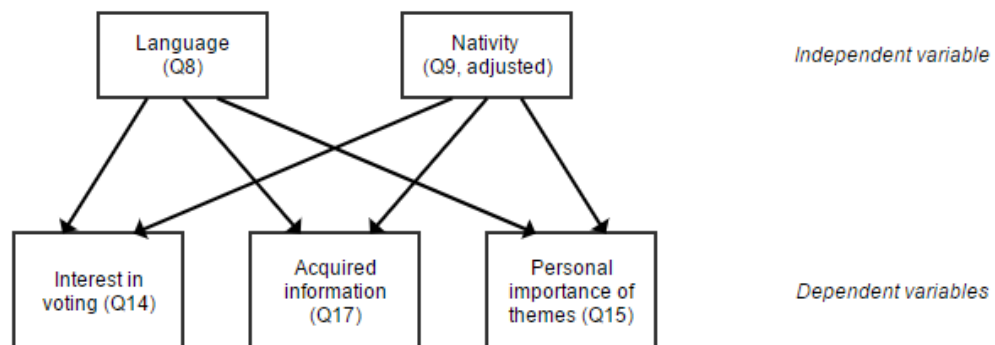
As the p-value is significant for the Interest and Information variables, a post hoc test can be carried out to determine where the differences between the groups lie. However, pairwise comparison between the migrant background categories did not reveal a statistically significant difference between any set of pairs for either variable.

As a conclusion, the p-values indicate that the difference between groups is statistically significant (but not highly so) for the Interest and Information variables, but not the Importance variable. Migrant background, therefore, plays a systematic role in how the panel affects interest in voting, and how likely respondents are to report gaining useful information from the panel, which suggests that the relevant factor in the difference may be a different “starting point”: less motivation, and less information about elections.

### 5.3.2 Mann-Whitney U test for differential effect of components

The clustering of answers observed, for example, for the Interest variable between immigrants and naturalized on the one hand, and native Finns on the other, seems to indicate that having moved to Finland may alone play a role in the distribution of answers. Moreover, testing separately the two or three elements used in placing respondents into groups may allow to refine the results and determine whether patterns are more visible. Further testing using the Mann-Whitney U test (Laerd Statistics, 2015b), which is the equivalent for pairs of the Kruskal-Wallis H test, for the effect of the separate components of the migrant background variable, i.e. mother tongue and place of birth as dichotomous variables, was carried out to determine if a clearer result could be obtained. Furthermore, the test adds another layer of information to interpret the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test. The updated research design is depicted in Figure 14. The null hypothesis was, again, that the migrant background category did not elicit differences in answer distributions between groups.

Figure 14: Updated research design





For all three variables, similarity in the shape of the distribution of the scores was unclear, therefore results will focus on distributions rather than means. The results of the tests will be presented separately for the two independent variables.

#### • **Mother tongue**

Mother tongue as a dichotomous variable was created by recoding a new variable with Finnish, Swedish and Sami as a mother tongue coded as 0 and other languages coded as 1. The sample did not contain any native Swedish speaker that had immigrated from Sweden to Finland. The p-value was clearly statistically significant for the Interest variable ( $n = 193$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $U = 5847$ ,  $z = 3237$ ) and the Information variable ( $n = 200$ ,  $p = .009$ ,  $U = 6033.500$ ,  $z = 2597$ ), but not significant for the Importance variable ( $n = 204$ ,  $p = 0.156$ ,  $U = 4645$ ,  $z = -1419$ ).

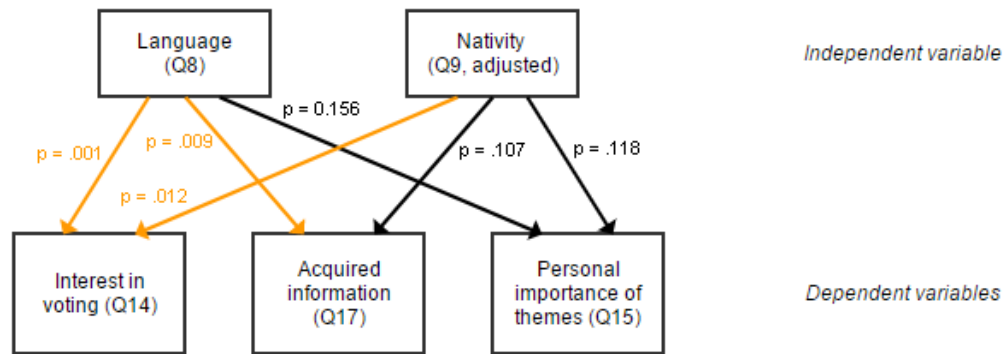
Effect on the interest in voting was statistically significantly higher for native speakers of other languages (mean rank = 108.97) than for native speakers of Finland's official languages (mean rank = 84.13). For the Information variable, similarly, the effect was statistically significantly more positive for non-native-language speakers (mean rank = 110.74) than for native-language speakers (mean rank = 90.06). Regardless of migration experience and citizenship, speaking another language than one of Finland's official languages allowed the panel to have a stronger effect, while the way respondents related to the themes did not follow this pattern.

#### • **Move to Finland**

The p-value was statistically significant for the Interest variable ( $n = 185$ ,  $p = .012$ ,  $U = 5153.500$ ,  $z = 2526$ ) but not for the Importance ( $n = 196$ ,  $p = .118$ ,  $U = 4209.500$ ,  $z = -1565$ ) and the Information levels ( $n = 194$ ,  $p = .107$ ,  $U = 5309.500$ ,  $z = 1612$ ). For the Interest variable, the effect was statistically more positive for those who has the experience of moving to Finland (mean rank = 102.63) than for those who have not (mean rank = 83.68). Moving to Finland or not was therefore not relevant to whether the respondents related to the issues discussed or not, or felt better informed or not, but it was for how more or less interested in voting the respondents were after the panel.

The results are summarized in Figure 15, where a colourful arrow indicated statistical significance over the .05 threshold.

Figure 15: Schematized results of the Mann-Whitney U tests



#### 5.4. Phone survey

The phone survey carried out the two following weeks after the election aimed to complete the results of the survey carried out at the events, with the benefit of being able to match by phone number the questionnaire data with the phone survey answers. Out of 225 valid questionnaires, 96 contained a phone number; 51 of them were reached by Magdalena Stenius, who carried out the phone survey, and accepted to answer to the follow-up questions. The fact that the respondents do not represent a random sample but a self-selected sample of another self-selected sample do not allow to make general comparisons with the results of the questionnaire. Rather, a short descriptive analysis of the relevant questions included in the phone survey will be presented as a comment on the previous results.

Of the 51 respondents in the phone survey, 48 declared having voted (94.1%) and 3 not (5.9%). One respondent did not have the right to vote, two out of two unsure respondents voted, but two respondents who had declared at the end of the panel planning to vote did not vote. The respondents who did not vote did not provide information on the effect of the panel on their decision.

64.4% of voters (29 cases) declared that the panel had no effect on their decision to vote or not, a combined 13.3% (2 and 4 cases) reported little or some effect on their decision to vote, and 22.2% (9 and 1 cases) reported quite a lot or very much effect on their decision to vote. While 85.7% of the Native Finn respondents reported no effect of the panel on their decision, in the combined Immigrant and Naturalized group, 8 out of 14 respondents (57.1%) reported quite a lot (respectively 2 and 5) or very much influence (one, from the Naturalized group) on their decision.

Table 16: Effect of panel on voting decision (post-election) by interest variable, combined scores

*Effect of panel on voting decision by interest variable*

Count		Did the panel affect your voting decision?			Total
		Only a little or		Quite a lot or very	
		Not at all	somewhat (combined)	much (combined)	
How did the panel affect your interest in the election? (Questionnaire)	No influence	15	0	0	15
	A little or much more interested (combined)	9	5	8	22
Total		24	5	8	37

While nearly every respondent in the phone survey both declared intending to vote or took the opportunity to do so, the panels seem to have reinforced the motivation or engagement of some of those who declared being more interested in voting after the panel, even though their decision to vote was made (Table 16).

The phone survey results are in line with questionnaire survey results presented earlier in terms of little actual effect on turnout due to the already high propensity to vote of survey respondents, as nearly all were planning to vote at the panel, yet the reported role of the panel in the decision of voters with migrant background indicates an increase in the motivation to vote, which may have further effects, for example, in convincing others to vote. Unfortunately, even though the phone survey also evaluated how much and with whom the respondents discussed about the election, measuring the potential effect of second level effect and its possible increase for more motivated individuals will have to be left for another study than this one.

## 6 Discussion

The Kaikkien Vaalit election panels have been held in 18 cities in front of over 720 attendees. Who did they reach? Who did they affect? Is the categorization used in the background of such projects relevant? All in all, is it worth organising political debates as a voter mobilization initiative?

The analysis of the data from collected feedback questionnaires presented a picture of the audience which corresponded quite closely to the defined target group: the audience was heterogeneous in terms of migrant background, half Native Finns and half having an element or several of migrant background, including immigrants of which half had lived in Finland for less than six years, and one third of the audience without voting rights in other Finnish elections than local ones. The low representation of second-generation immigrants, even though likely underestimated due to the implications of mother tongue registration, agrees with the research on political participation which shows worryingly low levels of engagement among the youth. However, categories with migration experience or another mother tongue were on average younger than the native Finns on the panel; age, too, may be an explanatory factor. The events reached more women than men, but less among the Immigrant and Naturalized categories; it reached attendees, among the Immigrant and Naturalized groups, whose majority has been in touch with school as an institution through their children. They reached an active, rather well-educated audience. Besides the obvious self-selection at play in observing attendees to a voluntary event, the description of the sample itself and the attendees' declared intention to vote both support what had been made evident when reviewing literature on GOTV experiments: high voting propensity attendees were an overwhelming majority in the audience.

This does not mean that the outcome of the panels brought forward in this analysis is negative. The average effect on the interest of respondents was rather or very positive or altogether 60% of respondents, even though a very significant number of respondents indicated that the panel had not affected their interest in voting. Although this is a better result than a decrease in interest, which was reported in a few cases, the effect has most likely a limited significance for overall voting turnout, as nine in ten respondents had indicated their intention to vote, with only 6.6% undecided, who furthermore did not report any markedly positive effect on their decision. The statistically significant

difference between native Finns and others shows that a margin of progression exists, as can also be seen in the proportion of undecided voters among the Immigrant category. Where Native Finns reported little or no positive effect on their interest in voting, the effect was significantly more positive among the Immigrant and Naturalized categories, and even more so among those who had lived between three to five or nine years in Finland. Be it in terms of age in general or of time spent in Finland, the panels' effects seemed to decrease with time. Combined with the strong representation of these residents for three to nine years within the audience, it seems that there could be a "best" time to activate. This is a finding of significant value for practitioners and will therefore be discussed further in 7.2.

While, for the practitioner, the importance of issues discussed reveals a strongly positive effect, with three in four respondents judging the topics as quite or very important and insignificant statistical differences between migrant groups, the combination with the information variable is particularly intriguing from a research perspective. For practice, the result can be interpreted in two ways: considering that the events used themes and questions issued from the same instructions set, this may either mean that the choice of issues discussed was balanced so as to be equally interesting – or uninteresting – to all attendees regardless of their migrant background, or that all attendees regardless of their background were interested in the same issues discussed. This suggests either a good design of the set of instructions with the inclusion of relevant topics for every kind of attendee migrant-background-wise, or, from the attendees' perspective, that regardless of their possible migrant background, the same issues, be they closely connected to diversity or not at all, are relevant to their own experiences or interests. But for the researcher, the question about the role and function of panel discussions is highlighted: the mean for general satisfaction is significantly higher than that of the acquired information, which would not make sense if the only expectation of attendees would be to learn relevant information from the panel. Considering that the bulk of the research made on political debates is concerned with how debates influence the opinions or choices of their audience between the political views represented in the debate, this result would call into question the informative capacity of the Kaikkien Vaalit events; however, in correlation with the high engagement of the audience and relatability of the issues, this may indicate that the

possibility to listen and participate to a discussion prevails on the strictly informative nature of the event.

Is the operated categorization relevant? To answer the research question, as presented in the above paragraphs, the panels did affect attendees differently depending on their migration background, but even so on its underlying components: language and migration experience. Language, in particular, was relevant to the Interest and Information variables, while the experience of migration was relevant only to the distribution of answers for the Interest variable. Overlying categories are a practical shortcut in a field of work that needs them, yet practitioners should use them while keeping in mind the elements behind it, and be wary of simplifying too much. In particular, the possible adverse effect of GOTV on representation within the electorate should be a major concern. In this case, however, the gap in turnout between migrant background and native voters may be addressed by such an event.

Finally, should or could debates be used to get out the vote? The limited effect on turnout and high propensity voter reach consolidate the consideration of events as only a secondary or complementary means of mobilizing voters, while the limited informative effect, which events are however designed to deliver, emphasize that it may work in another way than expected. In line with the ethos of the project that gave way to the Kaikkien Vaalit idea, considering participation only from the perspective of voting would overlook many, if not most of the benefits that come with the concept. Engaging citizens in discussion, putting them on an equal footing in the audience of an accessible panel where the concerns of each and all are debated, opening an avenue for exchange with decision-makers, all of these are valuable functions in their own right, which may incidentally reinforce participation also in the polls. The Kaikkien Vaalit debates, like other GOTV events, are very dependent on their individual design, but they are also strongly dependent on the context, to the point of perhaps functioning only as part of a complex combination of factors. As the preliminary voter information of the 2017 municipal elections disclose, the turnout among the Somali community reached 53%. Somali speakers were also the largest foreign language group among the audience. In Lieksa, for the first time, an immigrant was elected to the city council<sup>18</sup>; according to

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<sup>18</sup> Mikko Ahvenainen, "Abdillahi on Lieksan ensimmäinen maahanmuuttajavaltuutettu", Karjalainen, April 10th, 2017. <http://www.karjalainen.fi/uutiset/uutis-alueet/maakunta/item/138333-abdillahi-on-lieksan-ensimmainen-maahanmuuttajavaltuutettu> retrieved on May 7th, 2017.

one of the local organisers of the Kaikkien Vaalit panel organised there, the event was of importance in this happening<sup>19</sup>. A few days before the election, an attendee at the Myllypuro Kaikkien Vaalit panel also told me to expect a local Somali turnout of “at least 80%”, boosted by free car rides to the polling stations advertised on the community’s radio channel. As arenas for discussion and voting motivation, thematic panel discussions may be a gear, however tiny, in the organisation and mobilization of immigrant communities around “their” candidates.

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<sup>19</sup> ”Ja vielä. Lieksa sai ensimmäisen kerran maahanmuuttajataustaisen päättäjän! Tilaisuudella oli suuuuuri merkitys tässä asiassa.” E-mail conversation with a Moniheli employee.

## 7 Recommendations

The nature of an exploratory study is to open or at least point towards new paths for research; in this case, the new paths are also for practitioners; both disagreements and mutual interests in evaluating practice through research make of cooperation a pivotal value in further endeavours.

### 7.1. For researchers: An exploratory study to open new perspectives

Just as Kaikkien Vaalit is a novelty experiment, this work is characterized by its exploratory design and primarily aims to open and take note of research perspectives. The design of the questionnaire whose results were used in this study was purposefully very wide, as equivalent projects are scarce, and research on them even more so. Both event and gathered data offer distinct possibilities.

Regarding the variables exploited in this study, not all possible or suggested connections could be investigated. The possible effect of the acquisition of citizenship on political engagement, and the variation in effects by duration of stay or contextual time of arrival in Finland, are two examples. How general feedback scores and increase in interest were related to both relatability of topics and acquisition of information may shed more light on the role and function of debates. Comparisons between respondents with different mother tongues, with a special emphasis on Somali speakers, about which a lot of research already exists, may give more insight into the diversity among immigrants in Finland as a whole, or into specific mechanisms within communities.

In addition to socio-economic information, the survey form contains also information about the media practices of respondents, with whom they discuss about politics, and about their practices in terms of formal and less formal political participation and active citizenship. Respectively, their analysis may qualify the known concepts of political engagement and interest in politics within immigrant communities; help understand how the discourse about democracy and active citizens, and information in general, spreads out through social logic; and investigate the relation between different modes of political participation in the society, from formal voting to informal mobilization and association activities.

A lot of informative elements were left out of the scope of the data itself, which focused strictly on the audience. Yet attendees may not be the only ones to be affected by the



panel discussion; as an event designed to offer a way to exchange with would-be decision-makers, the panellists' attitudes and opinions towards immigrants and diversity may also be affected. Combined with the observations on the value of Kaikkien Vaalit events in terms of discussion about common themes rather than of purely informative potential, a step forward could be made in the direction of deliberative democracy theory – in particular if the design of the events itself would be change in the same direction.

## **7.2 For practitioners: How to make the events better?**

While some of the results show only a limited positive effect of the Kaikkien Vaalit events with regards to its objectives, the reader must keep in mind that effect on interest in voting as a proxy is only a small part of the events, and of the project as a whole. The effects of encounters and exchange between attendees and candidates, and between attendees of various backgrounds among the audience, are hardly quantifiable. However, some of the elements presented in the review of GOTV literature bear a very significant weight for practitioners.

The main lesson could be to be wary of differential effect on lower and higher propensity voters. While the more-or-less 20% of turnout among immigrants presents an overall negative picture of their participation, the diversity in participation and in terms of language groups within the group forces the attention; attempting to remedy to the low participation of the group as one entity may bring negative effects for the fair representation of voters among the electorate, if only the group members with the highest propensity are affected. However, reaching out even to the most active members of a generally not active group is likely to affect positively other group members with lower propensity thanks to the social logic of politics and second stage effects to other individuals in contact with the subjects. In a country dubbed the “promised land of associations”, where newcomers have adopted the same high activity in terms or associations, this is a very concrete possibility already noticed and used through cooperation with authorities. From that perspective, even reaching out to the readily interested is a potentially powerful mechanism. Considering the results, where the well-represented group with three to nine years of residence in Finland reported more positive effect both in terms of information and of interest after the panel, starting with them is a legitimate principle. Refining a further determining a “right time to activate” –

for example after the acquisition of an extent of Finnish language but early enough to be able to create effective positive habits against apathy, could guide practitioners in designing methods, and more precisely in choosing ways to reach the suitable target group, for example in collaboration with institutions where these groups are likely to be found at the right time.

Taking into account the participation of already politically interested and motivated people, what would be the best way to take benefits of such an audience in order to improve participation while keeping an eye on representation equality issues? Looking more closely to other examples of GOTV research, the effect of events on voter mobilization could be amplified with a few design changes; with alternative ways to organise the discussion in order to improve its informative capacity, such as informal meet-up with candidates or thematic discussions in small groups. Further narrowing down the target group of the event, at the risk of undermining the principle of heterogeneity of the audience, could also make the events more effective through a strengthened group identity and group consciousness. Election day festivals held in neighbourhoods with low turnout and high migrant background population, in consideration of the need to reach those with lower propensity, could be an alternative. Simply organising Kaikkien Vaalit event in low threshold spaces where the target group is already present, such as common association premises, as was done with the second Helsinki event in Myllypuro, is another alternative. Many alternative designs could be tested to carry out the objective of supporting the political participation of immigrants; this is where associational field actors, who have the expertise and intuition from their own experience and knowledge of the target group, have a determining role to play. They could be given a greater hand in choosing appropriate methods for their own target groups.

### **7.3 Cooperation at the intersection of research, practice and policy**

My own dual position when examining the Kaikkien Vaalit events, as a practitioner involved in the organisation of the events themselves while endeavouring to evaluate them, provided a unique opportunity, but was also a challenging one in many respects. It does not need to be so. Besides its value as allowing to observe an innovative practice, it also brought value to my own work by giving space for reflexivity in a field where time constraints and workload are very high, and the simultaneous demand for

flexibility, accountability and results renders a truly meaningful evaluation of one's work, at peace, unlikely to impossible. This is where the definition of a clearer role for research and a deepened cooperation between research and practice is needed.

Systematizing research in lieu of only project reporting based on arbitrary criteria, developing tool and methods based more closely on scientific method, could both make the work of NGOs more effective and productive.

For voter mobilization initiatives, this naturally leads to the practice of randomized experiments which, rather than striving to find the cheapest way to elicit a vote, would strive to generate the largest societal benefit by addressing those who would benefit from it the most. Systematizing such experiments would both benefit to research, as it would address often overlooked or yet little considered fields of study, to which NGOs could lead based on their own experience, and to practitioners, which would through it obtain better evidence of whether their empirically-based and often intuitive decision work, as well as better replicability, both for local actors or partners across borders. With a fast-increasing proportion of citizens with migrant background in Finland's larger cities, and the observed low mobilization of the youth, where they are strongly represented, finding efficient ways to address the issue is an imperative.

This statement has several implications in term of collaboration with national and local governments and other public institutions. As explained above, the possibility to conduct research on one's own practices is exceptional, and requires a level of personal involvement that cannot be demanded from employees. Therefore, developing democratic innovations requires funding both for the innovations themselves and the research carried out about them, as a cooperative project between different actors. Funding possibilities for the practices themselves exist already; however, lack of continuity due to projectification undermines the possible results on the longer term. With the closing of the third iCount project and lack of funding for a continuation, the mobilization of volunteers dwindled and the group dispersed.

The recommendations to decision-makers in terms of policy do not stop there, however. Rather, working together towards a common goal trumps financial support. The Ministry of Justice has been involved since the beginning of the first Kaikkien Vaalit campaign in 2015, as a cooperation partner in the framework of the iCount project, and was instrumental in providing both access to nationwide partners (such as the local

offices of the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment) and legitimacy by co-signing the invitation letter sent to political parties to find panellists. Without the financial support of a party expecting to receive more votes, as the practice usually is in the United States, mass forms of GOTV cannot be carried out without the access to registry information only institutional partners have. Institutional partners such as ministries should provide logistical support to non-governmental initiatives, and should do so with continuity. The three iterations of the iCount project were concluded in 2015 after the closing of the SOLID General Programme (Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows) which granted funding; with the following programme, priorities were shifted to issues more pressing than the political participation of immigrants, in the context of the sudden increase in the number of asylum seekers arriving in European countries. In the meanwhile, the coordination of the trained volunteers active in the project was stopped due to the absence of dedicated employees. Support “in nature” helps to improve and deepen the effects of such projects: by providing legitimacy to small non-governmental actors in the eyes of other partners, such as with the signature from the Ministry of Justice on the panellists’ invitation letter for the 2015 Kaikkien Vaalit tour; by involving its own partners to facilitate national-level coordinated campaigns; and by granting access to its resources in terms of reaching people. The latter aspect was in play when the iCount 3 project produced the letter to first-time voters sent at the occasion of the 2015 parliamentary elections to 20 000 recipients; an equivalent action could make the difference between fair representation through political participation and increased inequality in the society.

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## Appendix 1

Survey questionnaire used for data collection.



# KAIKKIIEN VAALIT

Tilaisuuden paikkakunta:

Keräämme tällä lomakkeella tietoa tutkimukseen, jossa arvioimme tilaisuuden vaikutusta kiinnostukseen äänestää tulevissa kuntavaaleissa. On tärkeää, että vastaat seuraaviin kysymyksiin, sillä se auttaa meitä jatkossakin edistämään osallistumista ja äänestämistä vaaleissa. Tutkimuksen tulokset ovat tilastomuotoisia taulukoita, joista ei voi erottaa yksittäisen henkilön vastauksia.

Kattavien tulosten saamiseksi keräämme myös aineistoa vaalien jälkeen. Kirjoita yhteystietosi alle, jos suostut osallistumaan tutkimukseen vastaamalla muutamaan kysymykseen puhelimitse viikolla 14.

Puhelinnumerosi: \_\_\_\_\_

### VASTAA ALLA OLEVIIN KYSYMYKSIIN, KIITOS!

1. Syntymävuotesi \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sukupuolesi \_\_\_\_\_

3. Mikä on perhetilanteesi?

☐

Naimaton / sinkku

☐

Naimisissa tai  
rekisteröidyssä parisuhteessa

☐

Avoliitossa

☐

Eronnut

☐

Leski

4. Kuinka monta alle 18-vuotiaista lasta sinulla on? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Kuinka monta vuotta yhteensä olet käynyt kouluja tai opiskellut? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Mikä on työtilanteesi tällä hetkellä? Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto:

☐

Työssäkäyvä

☐

Työtön

☐

Opiskelija

☐

Eläkeläinen

☐

Yrittäjä

☐

Muu, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Mikä on kansalaisuutesi? Valitse kaikki sopivat vaihtoehdot:

☐

Suomen kansalaisuus

☐

Muu kansalaisuus, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

☐

Entinen kansalaisuus, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Mikä on äidinkielesi? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Jos olet muuttanut Suomeen toisesta maasta, mikä oli Suomeen muuttosi syy?

☐

En muuttanut Suomeen

☐

Opiskelu

☐

Työ

☐

Perheside

☐

Humanitäärinen

☐

Muu, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Jos olet muuttanut Suomeen toisesta maasta, kuinka monta vuotta olet yhteensä asunut Suomessa? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Äänestitkö vuoden 2012 kuntavaaleissa? Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto.

☐

Äänestin vuoden  
2012 kuntavaaleissa

☐

En äänestänyt, koska  
minulla ei ollut äänioikeutta

☐

Minulla oli äänioikeus,  
mutta en äänestänyt

☐

En muista / En osaa  
sanoa

12. Aiotko äänestää tulevissa kuntavaaleissa? Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto.

☐

Kyllä, aion äänestää

☐

Äänestäisin, jos minulla  
olisi äänioikeus

☐

En äänestäisi, vaikka  
minulla olisi äänioikeus

☐

Ei, en aio äänestää

☐

En vielä tiedä

Kysymykset jatkuvat seuraavalla sivulla, käännä sivu!





13. Missä määrin seuraavat lauseet pitävät paikkansa omalla kohdallasi?	Ei lainkaan	Melko vähän	Jonkin verran	Melko paljon	Hyvin paljon
Seuraan uutisista ja muusta mediasta, mitä politiikassa tapahtuu...					
... kansainvälisellä tasolla.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... valtakunnan tasolla.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... kunnan tasolla.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... entisessä kotimaassani.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keskustelen usein (kasvokkain ja/tai puhelimitse, netissä...) politiikasta...					
... puolisoni kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... lapseni kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... vanhempieni kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... ystäväni kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... samaan yhdistykseen kuuluvien jäsenten kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... naapureideni kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... työkavereideni kanssa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toimin aktiivisesti...					
... poliittisessa puolueessa Suomessa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... mielestäni tärkeiden asioiden puolesta vaikuttamalla puoluepolitiikan ulkopuolella (aloitteiden allekirjoittamisella, mielenosoituksia).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... ammatillisessa tai ammatillisessa etujärjestössä.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... muussa yhdistyksessä tai järjestössä.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... yhdistyksessä, joka edustaa entisen kotimaani kulttuuria tai yhteisöä.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toimin aktiivisesti entisen kotimaani politiikassa.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### VASTAA SEURAVIIN KYSYMYKSIIN TAPAHTUMAN LOPUSSA!

14. Missä määrin paneelikeskustelu vaikutti kiinnostukseesi äänestää tulevilla kuntavaaleissa?

- ☐ En ole enää lainkaan kiinnostunut äänestämään
 ☐ En ole enää niin kiinnostunut äänestämään kuin olin aiemmin
 ☐ Paneeli ei vaikuttanut lainkaan kiinnostukseeni äänestämään
 ☐ Olen nyt jonkin verran kiinnostuneempi äänestämään
 ☐ Olen nyt paljon kiinnostuneempi äänestämään

15. Kuinka tärkeitä sinulle olivat asiat, joista paneeli keskusteli?

- ☐ Hyvin tärkeitä
 ☐ Melko tärkeitä
 ☐ Jonkin verran tärkeitä
 ☐ Vain vähän tärkeitä
 ☐ Eivät lainkaan tärkeitä

16. Mikä oli sinulle tärkein asia, josta paneeli keskusteli?

17. Saitko paneelista sellaista tietoa, joka auttaa sinua ehdokkaan ja/tai puolueen valitsemisessa?

- ☐ En lainkaan
 ☐ Vain vähän
 ☐ Jonkin verran
 ☐ Melko paljon
 ☐ Hyvin paljon

18. Kiitos, että jaksoit vastata tähän asti! Millainen mieli sinulle jäi tästä tilaisuudesta? Valitse sopivin hymiö!

- ☐  erittäin tyytymätön
 ☐  melko tyytymätön
 ☐  en tyytyväinen enkä tyytymätön
 ☐  melko tyytyväinen
 ☐  erittäin tyytyväinen

**Kiitos vastauksistasi! Muista palauttaa tämä lomake järjestäjille.**

Lisätietoa: Julie Breton, Moniheli ry/Helsingin yliopisto, 044 717 0225, [julie.breton@helsinki.fi](mailto:julie.breton@helsinki.fi)

## Appendix 2

### Questionnaire codebook.

[NUMERIC] sarjat alkaavat 0:sta lomakkeen ensimmäisellä sivulla, toisella sivulla 1:stä eli 1-5 skaala.

---

“ID” [STRING] (myös paperilomakkeeseen)

Tilaisuuden paikkakunta (+pvm) → “event” [NUMERIC] jossa values:

14.3. Hämeenlinna 1 → [0]	22.3. Helsinki (Caixa) → [7]	<del>25.3. Rovaniemi → ei lomakkeita</del>
15.3. Espoo → [1]	22.3. Vantaa → [8]	27.3. Mikkeli → [14]
16.3. Pori → [2]	22.3. Vaasa → [9]	27.3. Turku → [15]
20.3. Tampere → [3]	22.3. Pietarsaari → [10]	28.3. Lappeenranta → [16]
21.3. Oulu → [4]	22.3. Salo → [11]	29.3. Lieksa → [17]
21.3. Hämeenlinna 2 → [5]	23.3. Kouvola → [12]	30.3. Karjaa → [18]
22.3. Hämeenlinna 3 → [6]	23.3. Kuopio → [13]	3.4. Helsinki (Myllypuro) → [19]

Puhelinnumerosi: “phone” [STRING]

#### 1. Syntymävuotesi

→ “birthyear\_1” [STRING] eli VVVV

#### 2. Sukupuolesi

→ “gender\_2” [NUMERIC] where Values [0]=Mies, [1]=Nainen, [2]=Muu

#### 3. Mikä on perhetilanteesi?

→ “civilstatus\_3” [NUMERIC] where values:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Naimaton / sinkku [0]	Naimisissa tai rekisteröidyssä parisuhteessa [1]	Avoliitossa [2]	Eronnut [3]	Leski [4]

#### 4. Kuinka monta alle 18-vuotiaista lasta sinulla on?

→ “children\_4” [NUMERIC]

#### 5. Kuinka monta vuotta yhteensä olet käynyt kouluja tai opiskellut?

→ “education\_5” [NUMERIC]

#### 6. Mikä on työtilanteesi tällä hetkellä? Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto:

→ “occupation\_6a” [NUMERIC] where Values:

☐ Työssäkäyvä [0]  
☐ Työtön [1]  
☐ Opiskelija [2]  
☐ Eläkeläinen [3]  
☐ Yrittäjä [4]  
☐ Muu, mikä? [5] + Enemmän kuin 1 vastaus valittu = [6]

→ "occupation\_6b" [STRING]:

- Jos 6a = [5] "Muu, mikä" tai [6] Enemmän kuin yksi vastaus, niin mikä.

## 7. Mikä on kansalaisuutesi? Valitse kaikki sopivat vaihtoehdot:

☐ Suomen kansalaisuus  
☐ Muu kansalaisuus, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Entinen kansalaisuus, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

→ "kansalaisuus\_7a" [NUMERIC] where Values [0]=Respondent has ONLY FI citizenship [1]=Respondent has FI cit AND other/former citizenship [2]=Respondent has ONLY other/former citizenship.

→ "kansalaisuus\_7b" [STRING] If Other, then what citizenship (if checked, empty=999; if not checked, leave empty)

→ "kansalaisuus\_7c" [STRING] If Former, then what citizenship (if checked, empty=999; if not checked, leave empty)

## 8. Mikä on äidinkielesi?

→ "kieli\_8a" [NUMERIC] where Values [0]=Suomi [1]=Ruotsi [2]=Saame [3]=Muu

→ "kieli\_8b" [STRING] If Muu, then what

## 9. Jos olet muuttanut Suomeen toisesta maasta, mikä oli Suomeen muuttosi syy?

☐ En muuttanut Suomeen  
☐ Opiskelu  
☐ Työ  
☐ Perheside  
☐ Humanitäärinen  
☐ Muu, mikä? \_\_\_\_\_

→ "muutto\_9a" [NUMERIC] where Values [0]="En muuttanut Suomeen" [1]=Any other answer selected

→ "muutto\_9b" [NUMERIC] where Values [0]=Opiskelu [1]=Työ [2]=Perheside [3]=Humanitäärinen [4]=Muu, mikä

→ "muutto\_9c" [STRING] Jos Muu, niin mikä?

## 10. Jos olet muuttanut Suomeen toisesta maasta, kuinka monta vuotta olet yhteensä asunut Suomessa? \_\_\_\_\_

→ "asumisaika\_10" [NUMERIC]

## 11. Äänestitkö vuoden 2012 kuntavaaleissa? Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto.

→ "kuntavaalit2012\_11" [NUMERIC] where values:

☐ Äänestin vuoden 2012 kuntavaaleissa [0]  
☐ En äänestänyt, koska minulla ei ollut äänioikeutta [1]  
☐ Minulla oli äänioikeus, mutta en äänestänyt [2]  
☐ En muista / En osaa sanoa [3]

## 12. Aiotko äänestää tulevilla kuntavaaleilla? Valitse sopiva vaihtoehto.

→ "kuntavaalit2017\_12" [NUMERIC] where values:

☐ Kyllä, aion  
äänestää [0]

☐ Äänestäisin, jos  
minulla  
olisi äänioikeus [1]

☐ En äänestäisi,  
vaikka  
minulla olisi  
äänioikeus [2]

☐ Ei, en aio  
äänestää [3]

☐ En vielä  
tiedä [4]

**HUOM! Tästä lähtien skaalat ovat kaikki 1-5 eivätkä alkaa 0:sta!**

13. Missä määrin seuraavat lauseet pitävät paikkansa omalla kohdallasi?	Ei lainkaan	Melko vähän	Jonkin verran	Melko paljon	Hyvin paljon
<b>Seuraan uutisista ja muusta mediasta, mitä politiikassa tapahtuu...</b>					
13a1 ... kansainvälisellä tasolla.	1	2	3	4	5
13a2 ... valtakunnan tasolla.	1	2	3	4	5
13a3 ... kunnan tasolla.	1	2	3	4	5
13a4 ... entisessä kotimaassani.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Keskustelen usein (kasvokkain ja/tai puhelimitse, netissä) politiikasta...</b>					
13b1 ... puolisoni kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
13b2 ... lapseni kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
13b3 ... vanhempieni kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
13b4 ... ystäväni kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
13b5 ... samaan yhdistykseen kuuluvien jäsenten kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
13b6 ... naapureideni kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
13b7 ... työkavereideni kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Toimin aktiivisesti...</b>					
13c1 ... poliittisessa puolueessa Suomessa.	1	2	3	4	5
13c2 ... mielestäni tärkeiden asioiden puolesta vaikuttamalla puoluepolitiikan ulkopuolella (aloitteiden allekirjoittamisella, mielenosoituksia).	1	2	3	4	5
13c3 ... ammatillitossa tai ammatillisessa etujärjestössä.	1	2	3	4	5
13c4 ... muussa yhdistyksessä tai järjestössä.	1	2	3	4	5
13c5 ... yhdistyksessä, joka edustaa entisen kotimaani kulttuuria tai yhteisöä.	1	2	3	4	5
13c6 Toimin aktiivisesti entisen kotimaani politiikassa.	1	2	3	4	5

**14. Missä määrin paneelikeskustelu vaikutti kiinnostukseesi äänestää tulevilla kuntavaaleissa?**

→ "panel\_effect\_14" [NUMERIC] where values:

☐ En ole enää  
lainkaan  
kiinnostunut  
äänestämään  
[1]

☐ En ole enää  
niin kiinnostunut  
äänestämään  
kuin olin  
aiemmin [2]

☐ Paneeli ei  
vaikuttanut  
lainkaan  
kiinnostukseeni  
äänestämään [3]

☐ Olen nyt jonkin  
verran  
kiinnostuneempi  
äänestämään [4]

☐ Olen nyt paljon  
kiinnostuneempi  
äänestämään [5]

**15. Kuinka tärkeitä sinulle olivat asiat, joista paneeli keskusteli?**

*(Huom! Kysymyksen vastaukset viidestä yhteen tällä kertaa.)*

→ "issues\_importance\_15" [NUMERIC] where values:

- |  |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hyvin<br>tärkeitä [5] | <input type="checkbox"/> Melko<br>tärkeitä [4] | <input type="checkbox"/> Jonkin verran<br>tärkeitä [3] | <input type="checkbox"/> Vain vähän<br>tärkeitä [2] | <input type="checkbox"/> Eivät lainkaan<br>tärkeitä [1] |
|--|--|--|---|---|

**16. Mikä oli sinulle tärkein asia, josta paneeli keskusteli?**

→ "most\_important\_issue\_16" [STRING]






**17. Saitko paneelistä sellaista tietoa, joka auttaa sinua ehdokkaan ja/tai puolueen valitsemisessa?**

→ "gained\_information\_17" [NUMERIC] where values:

- |   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> En lainkaan<br>[1] | <input type="checkbox"/> Vain vähän<br>[2] | <input type="checkbox"/> Jonkin verran<br>[3] | <input type="checkbox"/> Melko paljon<br>[4] | <input type="checkbox"/> Hyvin paljon<br>[5] |
|---|--|---|--|--|

**18. Kiitos, että jaksoit vastata tähän asti! Millainen mieli sinulle jäi tästä tilaisuudesta?  
Valitse sopivin hymiö!**

→ "feedback\_18" [NUMERIC] where values:

- |  |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <br>erittäin<br>tyytymätön [1] | <input type="checkbox"/> <br>melko<br>tyytymätön [2] | <input type="checkbox"/> <br>en tyytyväinen enkä<br>tyytymätön [3] | <input type="checkbox"/> <br>melko<br>tyytyväinen [4] | <input type="checkbox"/> <br>erittäin<br>tyytyväinen [5] |
|--|---|---|--|---|

## Appendix 3

### Phone survey script and codebook

*Hei! Tässä Magdalena Stenius Kaikkien Vaalit -tiimistä. Osallistuit paikkakuntasi Kaikkien Vaalit -vaalipaneelitulaisuuteen ja jätit puhelinnumerosi jatkotutkimusta varten.*

*Onko sinulla nyt hetken aikaa vastata muutama kysymykseen? (Tämä kestää n. 5 minuuttia.)*

- ⇒ "Ei": Olisiko sinulla aikaa myöhemmin? Milloin voin soittaa sinulle takaisin?
- ⇒ "Kyllä" →

*On tärkeä, että saamme niin tarkkoja ja totuudenmukaisia vastauksia kuin mahdollista, olipa positiivisia tai negatiivisia vastauksia, jotta pystyisimme arvioimaan toiminnamme oikeita vaikutuksia.*

1. Ihan ensimmäisenä kysymyksenä: Oletko ehtinyt käydä äänestämässä?

Äänestysaktiivisuus ylläraportoidaan todella paljon, 8-20% vastauksista ovat siis yleensä vääriä, syynä sosiaalinen paine näyttää hyvältä kansalaiselta. Sen takia kysytään tällä tavalla – vastaajille helpompi sanoa että tuli este kuin se, ettei viittiny mennä.

#### TEL\_äänestikö [KYLLÄ=0, EI=1]

*Seuraaviin kysymyksiin valitaan vastaus seuraavista vaihtoehtoista: Ei lainkaan, Melko vähän, Jonkin verran, Melko paljon tai Hyvin paljon. Tämän lisäksi voit vastata En osaa sanoa. Selvä?*

2. Minkä verran Kaikkien Vaalit -vaalipaneeli vaikutti siihen, kävitkö äänestämässä vai ei?

#### TEL\_vaik\_äänestyspäättös [Ei lainkaan=1, Melko vähän=2, Jonkin verran=3, Melko paljon=4 tai Hyvin paljon=5]

3. [If respondent didn't vote (Q1=EI=1), skip this and move to Q4] Minkä verran KV-paneeli vaikutti siihen, ketä ehdokasta tai ketä puoluetta äänestit?

#### TEL\_vaik\_valinta [Ei lainkaan=1, Melko vähän=2, Jonkin verran=3, Melko paljon=4 tai Hyvin paljon=5]

4. Minkä verran olet seurannut uutisia näistä kuntavaaleista, esim. kampanjasta, ennusteista tai vaalien tuloksista?

#### TEL\_media [Ei lainkaan=1, Melko vähän=2, Jonkin verran=3, Melko paljon=4 tai Hyvin paljon=5]

*Seuraavaksi kyselen, kenen kanssa olet muistaaksesi keskustellut näistä kuntavaaleista. Keskustelu voi tapahtua kasvokkain, puhelimesta, netissä, jne. Jos tietty osa kysymyksestä ei sovellu sinuun, esim. jos kysyn puolisoa eikä sinulla on puolisoa, jne, niin ilmoita ettei kysymys sovellu sinuun.*

**Muistutus vastauksista tarvittaessa: Ei lainkaan=1, Melko vähän=2, Jonkin verran=3, Melko paljon=4, Hyvin paljon=5 + Ei sovellu minuun=6**

5. Eli: minkä verran olet keskustellut kuntavaaleista...
  - puolisoasi kanssa **TEL\_kesk\_puoliso**
  - lapsesi kanssa **TEL\_kesk\_lapsi**
  - vanhempiesi kanssa **TEL\_kesk\_vanhemmat**
  - ystäväsi kanssa **TEL\_kesk\_ystävät**
  - samaan yhdistykseen kuuluvien jäsenten kanssa, jos toimit aktiivisesti jossain yhdistyksessä **TEL\_kesk\_yhdistys**
  - naapureidesi kanssa **TEL\_kesk\_naapurit**
  - työkavereidesi kanssa **TEL\_kesk\_työkaverit**

*Kiitos kovasti! Julkaistaan kiertueen raportin kesään mennessä, yms.*